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THE
TWIN PARABLES.

THE

TWIN PARABLES,

OR

THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD:

A SERIES OF EXPOSITORY SERMONS

ON

SOME OF THE LEADING PARABLES OF OUR LORD;

TO WHICH IS APPENDED,

A Classification of these and other Developed and Undeveloped Parables of our Saviour.

By Rev. R. W. MECKLIN,
Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, West, Mississippi.

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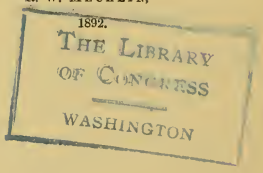

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Dedication.

To all whom I have served as Pastor, striving to instruct, comfort, and strengthen, as a feeble token of the tender affection I have for them, and the vital interest I take in their welfare, is this volume respectfully dedicated

by the Author.

PREFACE.

1. WE give this work to the public, believing that it opens up to the mind a method of studying the parables of Jesus not hitherto presented.

There have been many commentaries and expositions of the Parables, and many sermons and lectures upon them in all ages of the church's history, but we do not remember to have ever seen the subject handled as we have done in these pages.

2. This work has an interesting history. It was not devised with a view to publication; nor had we any other idea in treating these parables than to get at their correct meaning, and give our congregations the benefit of our studies. We imagined it to be an original line of thought, but this was only the result of an honest effort to bring forth from the treasury of truth "things new" as well as "old." Its history has no connection whatever with the spirit of sensationalism so prevalent in the pulpits of our day.

After having delivered several of these lectures at the regular Wednesday night prayer-meetings in Lexington, Mississippi, the author thought of having them printed in book-form, and given to the public. Wish-

ing and hoping in this way to widen our sphere of usefulness, we have prepared and given these lectures to the world of Bible readers and Christians.

3. With the prayer that the great Head of the church will bless these pages to the building up of his kingdom and the salvation of souls, we send it forth, amid the flood of literary productions, bespeaking for it the charity of critics and the prayers of all the friends of religious truth.

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE is, perhaps, no portion of the Word of God in which there has ever been such a general interest, and for which all men have shown such deep appreciation, as the parables of our Lord. They are still read with the impression that "never man spake like this man"; and that grace and favor are on his lips.

There is no part of the Bible that attracts the attention of children and young people like these parables. The youthful mind grasps with astonishing quickness and correctness the lessons designed to be taught in them.

Missionaries declare that the heathen man's thoughts are first arrested by Jesus' parables. Neither is it the story alone that engages them. For they will listen unmoved to an uninspired narrative, or a profane fable. They comprehend in a wonderful manner the divine purport of these heavenly figures of speech. The parables are to them like pictures. They find therein food for thought, and forcible illustrations of principles, that waken into life "the law of God written in their hearts." The darkened African, groping after God, never fails to see in the Parable of the Prodigal Son a representation of himself.

A brother minister once asked me how my prayer-meetings were attended. I told him that they could scarcely be kept up at all. No interest was taken in them.

"Why," said he, "I never have any trouble in that direction. For I lecture on the parables, and this keeps the interest alive."

"But," I replied, "the parables are limited in number, and you would soon find your subjects exhausted."

"No," he answered, "the parables of our Lord admit of so many various interpretations that we can go over them again and again with decided benefit. Besides, there are so many undeveloped parables. Then the Bible is full of figures of speech, which may serve as the skeleton of almost numberless parables."

All this goes to show that the study of the parables is the way to study the gospel of Jesus with most profit. Hence there have been so many to write on these parables. Hence the subject seems never to have become threadbare.

2. It will not appear strange, therefore, that we have presumed to issue another treatise on this fruitful theme. It was in the following way that our minds were lead to look at the parables in couplets. In lecturing on them at prayer-meeting, we frequently found it necessary to compare two parables, to show that they were not the same; and we were gradually brought to the idea that some, if not all of them, were intended to be taken in pairs. And having looked into the matter, we were encouraged to pursue it further, until we reached the conclusion that we had the mind of the Spirit.

3. It is evident to any prayerful and thoughtful reader of the New Testament, that there is abundant ground for this conclusion.

(1.) The root of the word *parable* implies a duality. The duality has generally been thought to consist in the figure and the thing figured forth by it. But it may have another meaning, viz., The putting of two things together to make a third.

(2.) The frequency with which some of the parables have been confounded, shows that there is a great similarity between them.

(3.) The natural senses are mostly set in pairs, as means by which to gain a knowledge of external things. And reasoning from analogy, we infer that the parables, by which spiritual things are set forth, were designed to be put and considered in pairs.

(4.) Let us look at an instance of the twin character of the parables. The Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, and that of the Great Supper, are so much alike that they naturally pair off themselves. Then there are the Parable of the Talents and the Pounds, which we can scarcely avoid coupling together. With others it is equally true, though the similarity is not always so evident.

4. This method of studying the parables has many advantages over any other that has ever been suggested.

(1.) It enables us the more satisfactorily to arrive at the leading idea. Like two eyes, they form a focus—a focus of thought.

(2.) The two parables being complemental to each other, we gather different views of the same truth. It

is like drawing a picture of the same scene from two standpoints. We have before us the one general landscape of objects; but from a certain position, a given group of objects is emphasized, while from another position, a different group is prominent.

5. Feeling, therefore, justified in taking this view of the parables of our Lord, we present, in the following pages, our plan of coupling them. In the main, we conceive, there cannot be a different arrangement, because the twin-likeness is self-evident. But in some cases, another pairing may be made. This we leave for the hands of the Spirit, under the prayerful study of the true disciple of Christ.

6. While these lectures have been presented in the form of expository sermons, it is not intended that they should be exhaustive, but rather suggestive.

They are so arranged as to lead the mind on from the study of one point to another of religion, thus rendering the whole both practical and entertaining.

We first consider religion in the abstract; then religion in the heart; then religion in the life; and lastly, religion in the world.

PART FIRST.

RELIGION IN THE ABSTRACT.

DOCTRINE.

SERMON I.

God's Interest in Sinners: "The Lost Piece of Silver," and "The Lost Sheep."

SERMON II.

Salvation not to be a Failure: "The Wedding," and "The Great Supper."

SERMON III.

Religion cannot be Hidden: "The Lighted Candle," and "The City on a Hill."

SERMON IV.

Religious Graces: "The Pounds," and "The Talents."

SERMON I.

GOD'S INTEREST IN THE SINNER.

"The Lost Piece of Silver." (Luke xv. 8–10.)
"The Lost Sheep." (Luke xv. 4–7; Matt. xviii. 12–14.)

1. THESE parables were spoken for the purpose of replying to the cavil of the Jews, because Jesus sat down and ate with publicans and sinners. They were designed to teach that it is nothing but reasonable that God and all holy beings, and good people, should be interested in the salvation of man.

2. In the first parable given above, the lost object is sought for its value. In the second, the lost sheep is sought, because the shepherd is sorry for it. In the first, there are ten objects of value, and one-tenth is lost. But in the other, there are one hundred objects of care, and one one-hundredth part is lost. In the one case, there is diligent and laborious search; and in the other, it is diligent, laborious, and dangerous. In the one instance, the objects not lost are taken along in the search; while in the other, they are left behind; but in both alike, *the mind is on the lost.*

3. Now the woman and the shepherd represent God; the money and the sheep lost represent the sinner; the search represents God's interest in the salvation of the soul; the finding, the penitence of man; and the rejoicing, the joy in heaven over a sinner returning to God.

4. From all of which, we deduce this subject: GOD TAKES A DEEP INTEREST IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS.

I. Why is God interested in this matter?

II. How does he show his interest?

I. Why is God interested in man's salvation? Because man is valuable, and because God sympathizes with him in his ruined estate.

1. The sinner's *value* induces God to desire his salvation. The woman sought the piece of silver, and the man the sheep, because they were valuable.

(1.) Man has an *inherent value*,—a value in and of himself. The *body* is valuable. It is not like the body of beasts, destined to be destroyed, or lose its identity. But it will be resurrected, and live forever. In a state of sin, it would be ever dying. But God would establish it in a state of progressive and continuous life.

The *soul* is valuable, made as it is, after God's image in knowledge and holiness, and capable of boundless development in joy or woe. The state of sin leads it into the latter experience, and God would deliver it.

(2.) Man is of *value to God*. He can praise and love his creator; and God longs for this service. All his intelligent creatures shall glorify him. But in sin, it is by constraint. God would get this glory as praise,—a free-will offering. All his creatures shall submit to him. In sin, it is a servile submission. God would have it as love,—the untrammeled devotion of the heart.

The body and soul are worth too much to be lost in sin and wretchedness. The homage of a loving

spirit is too precious and excellent in God's sight for him to forego it without an effort.

2. But divine *sympathy* for the sinner induced God to plan his salvation. It was sympathy that made the shepherd seek the lost sheep.

(1.) And this was the *leading motive* with God. For as the woman had nine pieces left,—nine times more values retained than lost; and as the shepherd had ninety-nine times more values secure than forfeited; so there are inestimable values left to God, even if man should be lost to him for ever. Man's value is insignificant, compared with what is still retained by God. God could do without man's praise and love, since there are myriads of other intelligences to do him reverence.

(2.) The *labor* to save a soul costs more than the man is worth. The woman's labor to recover the coin, and the shepherd's to find the sheep, was greater than the advantage realized. So the salvation of the sinner, secured at the price of Jesus' sufferings, and death and intercession, costs infinitely more than the souls of all men would be worth.

It must, therefore, have been mainly sympathy that induced God to lay the plan of salvation. He was sorry for man, body and soul,—left, as he was, in Satan's power, a prey to hellish and damning lusts, and manifold grievances and ills, separated from God and heaven, and an heir to eternal destruction.

(Another reason for God's interest in men, viz., because man is his offspring, is given to us in the parable of the Prodigal Son.)

II. How does God manifest his interest in man's

salvation? By seeking to save him, and by rejoicing at his restoration.

1. God *seeks* for the lost sinner; represented by the search for the coin and for the stray sheep.

(1.) The *dangers* to which Jesus exposed himself, in his life, sufferings, and death, are sufficient proof of God's intense concern for men in their lost estate. There were dangers to Christ's human nature, but they were small compared with those to which he subjected the honor and glory of Deity. To be incarnated, and to take part with man in all the infirmities to which flesh is heir,—it was calculated to lower the majesty of divinity in the estimation of humanity. Hence the rejection by the Jews of Jesus as the Messiah. Hence the gross infidelity into which the Jews have fallen. Hence religion has ever been a stumbling stone to men.

The *labors* of Christ upon earth,—wearied with his journeys, and preaching, and sin-bearing; the exertions of his apostles, and ministers, and people, to build up the kingdom of grace by restoring the lost sheep; the persecutions which his prophets underwent from the resistance of Satan and the opposition of the world; the battles, moral and physical, which have been fought for the truth; the tears shed, the prayers offered, the endless hardships undergone,—all this shows how laborious and dangerous has been God's search for lost souls. O there have been frequent goings into the mountains, and many cuts and bruises! There has been much hard sweeping among the trash and rubbish of worldliness and vice, and sensuality.

(2.) But O how *diligent* has been the search! How

diligent was Jesus "going about doing good!" There has been parental diligence, and pastoral diligence, and diligence in the school-room;—diligence in keeping down evil, in suppressing wickedness, in planting the gospel, in building up the church; to understand and impress divine truth, to convict and convert sinners, to sanctify professed Christians. So diligent is God in this work, that he enlists "all things," both physical and moral, of Providence and Redemption, to accomplish the end.

2. But God shows his interest in the salvation of men by rejoicing over their return to him. There was no greater joy among the angels when creation's work was completed, than when Redemption's scheme was aggressively begun at Jesus' advent. There is not one of the intelligences in glory but is made to join in this rejoicing.

(1.) God himself rejoices. The Spirit that dictated the songs of Revelation, is the outburst of Divine joy at the success of Redemption's plan. The hymns and psalms of exultation are the echo of Deity's feelings through the human medium.

(2.) The same love for holiness it is, that prompts the angels to sing together. As they minister to the wants of immortal beings on earth, they are made glad to find their ministrations redounding to the honor and glory of God, their King.

(3.) Saints on earth and in heaven rejoice, not only in response to the inner movings of the Divine nature, but also in accord with the sympathies and affections of humanity. They rejoice, not only that one more has become a willing subject of redeeming grace, but

because that one is dear to their hearts, and opens the prospect of affections and associations to be perpetuated forever.

Thus the spirit of Deity, residing in himself, or moving in the minds and souls of sanctified beings—that spirit is one of rejoicing at the salvation of the lost or erring.

APPLICATION.

1. If we do not take a deep interest in the salvation of sinners, it is because we are not partakers of the Divine nature. And this interest will be manifested by our earnest efforts to promote religion, and our unfeigned joy and satisfaction at its triumph. An idle and indifferent professor of Christ is, therefore, a hypocrite, deceiving himself and others.

2. As God does everything in the interests of Redemption's work, so ought, and so will, we, if we be Christians. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, it will all be for God's glory and honor, in the bringing of men from darkness to light, and from slavery to liberty.

3. As God denied himself, and in the person of his Son bore his cross to carry on this work, so will we. There will be nothing too precious to give up for this cause. There will be no burden too heavy for us to endure, if only we can save a soul.

SERMON II.

SALVATION SHALL NOT BE A FAILURE.

"The Wedding Supper." (Matt. xxii. 2–14.)
"The Great Supper." (Luke xiv. 16–24.)

1. The first of these parables is generally known by the title, "The Marriage of the King's Son." We have given it the above designation, because that seems to be more appropriate.

2. Both of these feasts were great suppers; but one was greater, because given by a king and on a remarkable occasion.

The latter of these parables was spoken at a meal, while the former occurred in the temple. The latter took place at an earlier period in the life of Christ than the former. One is a wedding supper, given on the occasion of the marriage of a king's son. The other is a great supper given by a certain man. In one, we read of servants, several of them, sent out to make the invitations. In the other, there is only one servant. In one, persons are invited from the highways alone; in the other, from the highways and hedges, and the poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind. In one, the guests are not compelled, as in the other. In the one, those who are not worthy are punished; in the other, they are simply excluded. In the one, there is a review or inspection of the guests; in the other, they are left undisturbed.

3. Yet these two parables teach the same great truth, viz.: THE PREPARATIONS MADE BY GOD FOR MAN'S SALVATION SHALL NOT BE A FAILURE.

They may be despised and rejected by some, but they will be offered to and received by others. The house will be filled, and the wedding will be furnished with guests, though they are from the highways and hedges; though they are the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind; though they are both good and bad; and though they are compelled to come in.

Let us notice:—

I. The efforts put forth to accomplish the end would lead us to expect that there should not be a failure.

II. This plan proves successful in spite of the efforts made to the contrary.

I. *The efforts put forth to accomplish the salvation of men* are such as would lead us to expect they should not prove a failure.

1. Notice *the benefits of religion*, represented here by the wedding and the great supper.

(1.) Why *the spirit that prompted* the preparation of this *feast* would lead us to expect men to appreciate it. It was a noble generosity that made the king give this wedding supper, when his son married, for the benefit of the farmers and merchants and the mechanics of his realm. It was extraordinary goodness that induced this man to make a supper for the enjoyment of his neighbors, even though they were not his friends. It was for their advantage, and not his. His was all the expense and trouble; theirs, the pleasure and honor. It was kind; it was unselfish; it was benevolent.

So, on a grander scale, was the spirit that prompted

God to devise and prepare for men the benefits of salvation. He aimed only at our happiness. He could have maintained his honor, secured his throne, and enjoyed his glory and bliss, in himself, without our service, or presence, or worship. But for our sakes he sought it. Surely it is reasonable to expect that men would avail themselves of what he has so generously provided.

(2). Then consider *the richness* of this preparation. It was a *great* supper. It was a wedding—a *royal* wedding supper. "The oxen and the fatlings were killed, and all things" that were good and palatable were at hand. Nothing that the veriest epicure could wish was left off; and there was plenty of everything. Then the company of guests was to be of the goodliest kind: the noble, the rich, the cultured, the *élite*, the *bon tón*—all were to be there; for "he bade many." Why should there not be a full house? Why should the wedding not be furnished with guests? Surely, in all reason, —surely it must be so.

But this is only a faint representation of what God has done for men in redemption. The benefits of religion are prepared for the body and the mind, for this world and the world to come. "No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly." "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing." The guests are "the general assembly and church of the first-born;" cherubim and seraphim; "the glory and honor of the kingdoms and nations" of earth, which are "to be brought into it." Yea, "eye hath not seen, and

ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Why, then, should the Lord's house not be filled? Why should this heavenly wedding not be furnished with guests? Certainly reason would teach us that this would be the case.

(3.) But look at this wedding. It seems that the king *brought about* the marriage of his son that he might have an excuse for giving a feast. An ordinary dining was not sufficient to satisfy the benevolent wish of the monarch. He sought an occasion which would allow him to furnish the very noblest entertainment, and justify him in lavishing upon his subjects the honor and felicities of his palace and household.

But who shall say that this fairly represents what God has done for sinners, in sending his only Son to become flesh and dwell among us? Jesus' incarnation, "God manifest in the flesh," was the marriage of the Heavenly Father's Son to human nature, and furnished the occasion for the wedding supper of redemption. God thus sought an opportunity to open the treasuries of his grace for man's use. He thus found an expedient that would furnish an excuse for crowning the poor sinner with the glory and honor of divinity and the heavenly world.

Surely this was enough to lead us to expect a hearty acceptance of God's offer on the part of lost men. Why should any one refuse? Why should not the plan of salvation be a perfect success?

2. But this was not all the effort made to accomplish

our salvation. There have been urgent and frequent invitations and exhortations.

On three separate occasions the servants were sent forth by the king to invite guests to the wedding; and these servants did their work faithfully. The man who prepared the supper, sent out his one servant, three times, on a special mission of invitation and exhortation, to gather guests; and this servant wrought diligently.

These efforts to furnish the supper with guests represent God's efforts to render the plan of salvation efficient in the redemption of men.

(1.) They represent the varied work of God's servants in the world; the example and precept of the patriarchs; the administrations and the discipline of the kings; the psalmody and verse of the inspired poets; the teachings and warnings of the holy prophets; the preaching and writing of the Twelve Apostles. They represent the labors of men since the apostolic age; the earnest self-denial and hardships of the fathers; the loving calls and clear demonstrations of truth by the ministry; the dangerous adventures and apparently fruitless toil of missionaries; the prayerful work and painstaking instruction given by Sabbath-school teachers; the arduous labors and exhausting anxiety of evangelists; the burning words of exhorters; the heart yearnings of Christian mothers; the tearful prayers of pious fathers. "And what shall I say more? for time would fail me to tell" of self-denials, of cross-bearings, of soul-longings, of midnight grievings, of heartbroken cries, and consecrated life and business to the cause of Jesus.

Surely enough has been done to lead us to expect a glorious success for God's scheme of redemption; and again we are led to emphasize the question—"Why should there be any failure?"

(2.) But these efforts set forth in the parables before us represent the direct and powerful work of the one Servant of the Master—the Holy Spirit. What patient pleading with self-destroying man! what long-continued standing at the closed door of men's hearts! what persistent knocking! what affectionate wooing for an opening! what earnest calls for a hearing! what ravishing words of love! what rich presentation of promises! what glorious coloring of rewards and punishments! what gracious offers of entrance and communion!

Throughout all the ages it has been thus. In the days of Adam; in the times of Noah; in the ages of the patriarchs; under the dispensation of the law; in the eventful periods of the judges; in the turbulent reigns of the kings; in the declining epochs of the Jewish theocracy; in the stirring years of Jesus' ministry; and all along. In every land, in every clime, in every nation, in every tribe, in every tongue; at the foot of the throne; within the gates of the palace; behind the walls of the dungeon; beneath the humble roof of the beggar; in the gloaming of caverns; beside running rivers; over barren deserts; amid shadowy forests—everywhere. The Spirit of the living God has carried his invitations into consecrated temples of worship; into quiet households; into the secret chamber. He has stood beside sanctuary altars; he has waited beside home hearth-stones; he has plead with hearts in their seclusion; and his message has

been: "Come, for all are things ready! Come unto the marriage."

God and Heaven only know what efforts the Holy Spirit hath made to convert the world and fill the mansions of the New Jerusalem with saints.

Surely it will, it must, all avail to furnish the wedding with guests. It could not be otherwise.

II. And in spite of the efforts made to the contrary, God's scheme of redemption shall succeed.

But we are ready to exclaim: "Surely there has been no opposition to all God's benevolent plans and earnest efforts!" And it may well be asked: "Is it possible that all this does not meet with the most cheerful acceptance and approval, and elicit man's sincerest gratitude and highest praise?" It is.

1. But what has been the character of this opposition? When the king sent out servants to call in the guests, some "would not come,"—they point-blankly refused, without giving any reason; others "made light of it,"—spoke of it, or acted with reference to it, as if it were folly; others "took his servants and entreated them spitefully, and slew them;" and others came without making any of the required preparations, as if to insult the king. And when the man who made the great supper sent out his servants to call in the guests, they all began, with one consent, to make excuse—excuses of business, excuses of pleasure. It seems that there was a conspiracy to the intent that the supper should be a failure.

So there has ever been a conspiracy among men, with the purpose that the religion of Jesus, with all its rich

provisions and earnest labors, should not accomplish the end aimed at, viz., man's salvation and happiness.

(1.) Notice, first, that some disregard the requirements of the gospel. Outwardly, by profession, they come to Christ. They join the church. They wait upon God in all his ordinances. But they are conscious that their hearts have never been changed, and that they do not bear God's likeness and image, and are having a name to live while they are dead.

The opposition, unintentional it is true, of this class, is of a very hurtful and dangerous character. It brings the greatest shame and contempt upon the church.

(2.) There is a class of persons who outwardly hold the plan of salvation in high regard, and treat its followers with the utmost respect, and receive gospel invitations with the politest courtesy. There is nothing to give offence, in anything they say or do. True, they do not accept of Christ's gracious invitation. But they seem to feel that they ought to do so. For they are all the time, either formally or informally, *making excuse* for their conduct. They beg of the church not to think hard of them. They have no idea of forever estranging themselves from God the Father, and Jesus the Elder Brother. Their conduct, and sometimes their words, express the idea: "I pray thee, do please, be kind enough to 'have me excused' from being a Christian. I would like to be one, but I can't, just at present; 'at some more convenient season,' I will attend to the matter. It is too important to be neglected, and I do not have any idea of neglecting it.

But, then, I cannot see to it just now. 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'"

(3.) Some there are, who, without trying to palliate their conduct, and yet without any objection to religion, say plainly: "No; I will not have this salvation. Others can accept it, if they please, but I will not. I I do not need it; I do not appreciate it; I do not desire it; I 'care for none of these things.'"

(4.) There are others, who go one step further, and not only reject Christ, but *make light* of religion, its author, its followers, its operation. They "sit in the seat of the scornful." They are atheists, and deists, and infidels, and skeptics. They are irreverent, and profane, and sacrilegious.

(5.) But there is yet another class, that is more outspoken and vicious in its opposition. They violently *oppose* religious workers. They try to kill the servants of the great King as such, by destroying their influence. They say Christians are hypocrites, and magnify their blunders into crimes, and their faults unto vices. They endeavor to slander them, or at least to circulate such reports as will make men lose confidence in them. They try to counteract the force of their teaching or example. Yea, there are some few persons who let their opposition to the truth go so far, that they destroy the property and even the lives, of God's earnest working servants.

When the world contemplates all this varied opposition to religion, it frequently concludes: "Religion is a failure." Yea, many good men become so cast down that they despair of ever being able to build up the church. And it is not unfrequently the case that

the whole church comes to this conclusion, and all religious effort is paralyzed.

2. But, notwithstanding this strong and multiform opposition to God's plan of redemption, and notwithstanding the despondency of God's people, and the apparent triumph of Satan and the world, we may rest assured that "God, who sitteth in the heavens, will have them in derision," and he it is that saith: "My house shall be filled." It is of his salvation it is written, "The wedding shall be furnished with guests."

The king could not get for guests the more highly favored, those whom he honored with cards of special invitation. But he sent out and got those who had not been so highly favored—those who had been outlawed for crime; those who were beggars; those who would be glad to win the king's notice, and sit at his table, and receive the honors which he offered.

The man who made the supper could not get for guests those whom he chose for the purpose—his favorites and neighbors. But he found plenty that he could, for they were poor, and would be glad to get to such a table; they were maimed, and halt, and blind, and made a scant and precarious living, barely having enough to keep body and soul together; and they were robbers and thieves; and, ostracized by society, they would be glad to get back.

(1.) So the religion of Jesus was a failure so far as the highly-favored Jews were concerned. It is often a failure among people these days that have the greatest religious advantages. It is often a failure in families where it seems like, if anywhere, it ought to succeed. It is often a failure with persons who have been

brought up in the very lap of the church. It may be a failure among people who have plenty of the good things of this world—its honors, its profits, its enjoyments, its privileges. But still it is true—*religion shall not be a failure.*

(2.) There will be found those who will feel the need of its benefits in this life and in the life to come. There will always be some who will hunger for its provisions and long for its honors. The Spirit and his earnest workers will ever find men whom they can persuade to be the followers of Christ Jesus.

And the plan of salvation shall succeed, not only partially; but God will have a head for every crown that he has in Heaven. He will find fingers for every harp that is hung in the halls of the Father's house. He will bring an occupant into every mansion that he has prepared. It was Jesus who said: "All that my Father gave me shall come to me;" and, "Not one of them is lost."

Application.

1. In order for men to be saved, the means must be diligently and perseveringly used. Men must labor earnestly and constantly, and they must be aided by the Holy Spirit. We who thus labor should be encouraged by the assurance, that we cannot labor in vain. We may not see the fruit of our efforts, but God will surely bless them.

2. God will not bear always with those who oppose him. It angers him for men to refuse Christ; to make light of religion; to fight against good; to make excuses for not becoming Christians; to insult him by pretend-

ing to be Christians when they are not. It, therefore, becomes us to be careful, and earnest, and watchful about this matter, lest we incur God's displeasure by our unbelief, or our infidelity, or our impenitency, or our worldly-mindedness, or our hypocrisy. "For many are called, but few are chosen."

SERMON III.

RELIGION WILL NOT BE HID.

"The City Set on a Hill." (Matt. v. 14.)
"The Lighted Candle." (Matt. v. 15; Mark iv 21; Luke viii. 16; Luke xi. 33.)

1. IT will be observed that Luke records the latter parable twice, showing that the Saviour used it upon two separate occasions. He may have used some of the other parables in the same way, only diversifying incidents in order to illustrate the point immediately before him. This gives us a clue to the idea of twin parables.

2. Notice the connection. St. Matthew brings the parables in immediately after the beatitudes, when Jesus was speaking of the influence of his people in the world. Mark and Luke do not relate but one,—that of the Candle. And they bring it in just after the parable of the Sower. Luke records it twice: the first time, in the connection of which we have spoken; and the second time, just after Jesus had contrasted the conduct of the Jews in his day with that of Nineveh in the days of Jonah.

3. Matthew and Luke record the parable of the Candle as a positive declaration of Jesus; Mark, as an interrogative affirmation. Matthew speaks of hiding the light "under a bushel;" Mark, "under a bed;" while Luke omits the mention of the bushel, but

speaks of the vessel and the bed. All refer to the candlestick. Mark makes no allusion to the purpose in lighting a candle, while Matthew says it is to give light unto all that are in the house; and Luke says, "That they which enter in may see the light."

4. By all these comparisons we are led to see that the idea intended to be conveyed is this:

RELIGION WILL NOT BE HID, neither religion in the heart, nor in the world. It is "a city set on a hill,"—a lighted candle on a candlestick.

This subject will find its development in the consideration of the following topics:

I. The prime nature of religion.

II. The effects of religion.

In the amplification of these topics, the thoughts suggested by the parables will serve as our guides.

I. Notice THE NATURE OF RELIGION.

1. It is like *a city*.

(1.) A city is builded up *by degrees*. It is not a sudden formation. The foundation is laid, or the main outlines designated. One addition after another is made, until the degree of extension is coördinate with the limits. Then, when one order of limits is reached, another is set up, so that completion is never attained.

So is it with religion. It is builded up in the heart and in the world, step by step.

(*a.*) The foundation is laid in conversion, or effectual calling. That must underlie and define everything else. The Spirit, in conviction of sin and misery, digs deep, taking out all that is unreal, and securing a rock

bottom. He lays the corner-stone by enlightenment in the knowledge of Christ. He places the ground-sills of a renewed will and a well-defined purpose to serve God by faith in Christ.

(*b.*) This done, the superstructure of sanctification is put up, piece by piece and stone by stone. We "add to our faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge," &c.; until "the greatest of all these is charity."

(*c.*) "But whom he foreknew, he also predestinated; and whom he predestinated, them he also called; moreover, whom he called, he also justified; and whom he justified, he also glorified." And when shall we say that will end? For are not saints to be made perfect, even as God is perfect?

(2.) But a city is builded up *by groups*. It is no constituted as a compact unit. It is not put together as an unbroken and unpartitioned edifice. Here a group of dwellings and premises; there a block of buildings separated from others by streets. There is society, but the society is collective. All the parts are connected, but each is an independent and individual whole.

So is it with the graces of which religion is builded. Each grace forms a group of its own. The process of sanctification is like a mathematical operation. The problem of holiness is stated. The clew of grace through faith in Christ is incorporated. The separate steps of regeneration, conversion, and development into the Divine Image, are taken; and the answer—Heaven—is the result. But that result is reached by independent operations. All the parts are connected, but each is a whole.

a. There is a group of graces that relates to God—such as faith, hope, love, and so on.

b. There is another group that relates to our fellow-men—such as forgiveness, brotherly love, kindness, gentleness, charity, and so on.

c. There is another that relates to our circumstances—such as patience, temperance, and so on.

Each one of these groups must form a unit. They are distinct from each other. But they are all inseparably united in Christ Jesus; and they all belong in the solution of the problem of eternal life.

2. Religion is like *a lighted candle*.

(1.) The candle is all ready for the purpose for which it was designed. There are the sperm, the wick, and the combustible chemicals, incorporated. It has only to be ignited—touched off, as it were. Nothing additional is needed. No change is made in the constitution or arrangement of the parts.

So it is in religion. The faculties existing are only set afire—put to burning. In regeneration, for instance, no new faculty is imparted. The old faculties are only put into operation and exercise.

The body is the outward and visible part of this candle—that vehicle in which is concealed the soul-wick; and, diffused through both, are the passions, affections, and sensibilities. Grace does not make a new body. It only sets it to work for God. Grace does not create a new soul. It only brings unto it "the Light of the World." Grace does not produce new emotions. It only arouses those already existing, so that they burn for Jesus.

(2.) The power that lights the candle is external.

There is such a thing, so said, as spontaneous combustion—a body setting itself afire. But the *candle* does not light itself. The fire comes from somewhere else. The match is struck; it is applied to the wick; there is a moment or two of heating; and the candle burns.

So religion in the soul is not the work of the soul itself. There is no spontaneous combustion in the religious world. That would be "establishing our own righteousness." That would be works saving us. But religion is "not of works, lest any man should boast." It is "of grace through faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God."

The Holy Spirit takes the match of truth; ignites it by his special operation; by the means of grace and divinely instituted ordinances he applies it to the soul; and, after a season, during which the spiritual man is warmed, heated, aroused, the soul blazes up with the heavenly light and heat of religion.

Thus religion in the heart and in the world originates with God. He is its "author." It exists and continues through his agency alone. He is its "finisher." He lights the candle of truth and grace. He builds the city on Zion's sacred hill, "beautiful for situation; the joy of the whole earth; the city of the Great King."

II. Notice from the parables the effects of religion.

1. The city on the hill and the lighted candle on the candlestick were *neither of them intended to be kept concealed.* Why build the city on the hill? That it might be noticed. Why set a candle on a candlestick? That its light should be seen. So with religion.

(1.) God wants the world to see and know of our

conversion to him, and of our growth in piety. Hence he makes a public confession a necessary part of personal religion. "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Confessing Christ is putting our religion into notice. God requires us to live up to our profession. That is putting our candle upon a candlestick. God calls upon his people to renew their vows at the Lord's table. That is putting the candle upon the candlestick. We are exhorted to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour." "He predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son."

(2.) Neither is this purpose of God foreign to the will and design of the true convert himself. He is not only not ashamed of Jesus, or his own alliance with him, but the *first* desire of the renewed heart is: "Hallowed be thy name," O God! He begins the life of faith, that he may glorify God. For the same purpose he perseveres therein. He endorses the proposition, that "man's chief end is to glorify God." It could not be otherwise, since "it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure." It could but be thus, when "the seed of God remaineth in him."

2. The city is *not built for the use of the builder alone*, or of the individual owners of its separate parts. It is designed to promote the well-being of the community; to develop its culture and refinement; to shelter the wayfarer behind its walls, and under its roofs; to give impetus to trade and enterprise, and so on. It is not built alone to accumulate property, or to serve a convenience, but it is built to diffuse blessings, and minister to the comfort of mankind.

The candle is not lighted and put on a candlestick for the use simply and only of him who lights it. This the context declares plainly. It is for all that are in the house. It consumes away for the use of those around it. So religion.

(1.) Its object is to better the condition of mankind. Not only do *Christians* get its benefits, but even the wicked, for the sake of the former. And while the main design of religion is to bring men to "the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus," yet it aims at the amelioration of man's condition, physically, morally, mentally, and socially. In it, all the families and nations of the earth are to be blest.

(2.) Moreover, it is the aim of the Founder of the Christian religion, that the adherents of it should live for the good of others. Though poor, like their Master, they are to make many rich. No man is to live to himself. Each one is exhorted to bear another's burdens. Like their Saviour, "the zeal of God's house" is to eat them up. "Except a corn of wheat die, it abideth alone."

So it happens that religion makes itself known and felt.

The city on a hill cannot be hid. If built in the plain, it could be partly hidden. But not so when built on an eminence, where its edifices, its walls, its roofs, its towers, are outlined against the very sky, and may be seen afar off.

The lighted candle would be hidden if put under a bushel or a bed. But it cannot be hidden if placed upon a candlestick.

Neither can religion be concealed. It cannot be

put under any kind of covering. It, like its Founder, would have its "fame to come abroad." Why?

(1.) Religion cannot be hid, *because it implies a change of conduct.* Where a very wicked man has been converted, this is clearly the case. The profane swearer ceases to swear; the drunkard becomes sober and temperate; the libertine becomes pure and chaste. How could religion be concealed in such a case as Saul of Tarsus, where, from being a persecutor, the subject becomes a preacher of righteousness, "not, a whit behind the very chiefest apostle?"

(2.) But suppose the convert is one who was before moral and upright apparently, then could not conversion be such an unnoticeable fact that the existence of religion would be almost hidden from the world? Not so. Before conversion, his position is noticeable from its negative character. He is not a thief; not a liar, not a murderer; not an adulterer; but when that is said, all is said. After conversion, however, religion makes his character positive. He is not only not a wicked man, but he is a religious man. Before, he was neutral; now, he is assertively on God's side. Before, he offered only the offering of Cain; now, he presents the sacrifice of Abel.

Thus, the effects of religion are such that it cannot be hid. Its votaries "come to the light, that their deeds may be manifest that they are wrought in God." They become the light of the world.

APPLICATION.

1. The consideration of this subject teaches us the necessity of using the means of grace diligently. As

the candle cannot be lighted without fire in some form, so religion cannot be brought into being in the soul without the use of the truth. As the fire will not light the candle unless brought into contact with the wick, so truth will not affect the mind and heart without the use of the ordinances by which it is administered and enforced. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" If a man will not go to preaching, or if he forsake the assembling of the saints, or if he search not the Scriptures, or if he commune not in prayer, he cannot expect to become converted; or, if converted, to be "a bright and shining light, in which others may rejoice for a season;" or to adorn the doctrine of Christ Jesus.

2. Let us learn also the imperative necessity for the agency of the Holy Spirit. As the fire, brought near to the candle, will not light it until the wick has been heated and the chemical ingredients brought into positive action, and as the fire will not come of itself to the wick, so the truth preached, or read, or studied, will not convert the soul until the Holy Ghost "take of the things of Christ and show them unto us;" until the Spirit bear witness to the truth, and, by its personal application, warm and stir the soul, and call into exercise all its latent powers and faculties. "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the word an effectual means of salvation." "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" Then it is that the preaching of the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." Let

us, then, pray for the Spirit to accompany and apply the word read and heard; "for without him we can do nothing."

3. We also learn here that religion is a growth—a building up by degrees. "The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." There is laid one stone to-day, and another to-morrow, until a grace is matured. There rises up one grace here and another yonder, until a group is finished. The group of graces that pertain specially to our relation with God, may grow most rapidly. Or the group that is connected with man may go up first. But, little by little, they will all appear. And yet, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then, face to face." "Now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known." Let us, then, be encouraged, though we may be very imperfect, if only we are making advances. Let us remember that there is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Let us count not ourselves "to have attained," but this one thing do, "forgetting the things that are behind" (losing sight of any advances made or any failures experienced), "and reaching forth to that which is before, let us press forward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

4. But let us not fail to learn, that a desire to do good, and thus honor and glorify God, is an inseparable characteristic of true conversion. There must be

a willingness to spend and be spent for God and for souls. We must not let our light be hidden under the bushel of worldliness or the bed of lust. But we must set it upon the candlestick of a pious walk and conversation, and let it so shine that men "may see our good works, and be constrained to glorify our Father which is in heaven."

SERMON IV.

RELIGIOUS GRACES.

"The Talents." (Matt. xxv. 14-30.)
"The Pounds." (Luke xix. 12-27.)

1. THE leading features in both these parables are the distribution of money among the servants, the use to which they put it, and the account required of them. In the one case, the master gave all his goods to his servants; in the other, the master gave part of his money to a few chosen servants, and left them in charge of his business. The former teaches the doctrine of spiritual graces; the latter, the doctrine of official graces. The subject, therefore, is the doctrine of

The Religious Graces.

I. We cannot fail to notice from the parables that there are certain *properties which belong in common to both these classes of religious graces.*

1. They both *come from God*, as the talents and the pounds were alike the bestowments of a master.

(1.) The Scriptures teach that the spiritual graces are the fruit of the Spirit. All the thoughts, and feelings, and emotions that lead to conversion, as well as all the mental and moral developments pertaining to sanctification, are suggested to or wrought in the heart, and mind, and life by the Holy Ghost.

(2.) Whatever capacities or qualifications a man

may possess as a church officer are the gift of the same Spirit. The apostle Paul again and again teaches this. So likewise did the Saviour.

2. These endowments, however, are *not gifts absolutely*. They do not belong to men as individual and inalienable possessions. They are merely given in trust, as these masters gave the money to their servants to be used in the masters' interests.

(1.) If God bestow upon us the grace of conviction, or of penitence, or of faith, or of hope, or any other, his object is that they may bring forth fruit to his honor and glory.

(2.) If God endows a man with faculties by which he may become an efficient minister, or ruling elder, or deacon, his object is that they should be used for the promotion of his kingdom.

The subject of divine grace and the office-bearer in the church, are alike God's servants. They are both workers for the Heavenly Master, putting forth the talents or pounds to the exchangers, and thus trading with the same.

3. God expects us to give an account of these gifts to himself, just as, in the parables, was required of the servants.

(1.) Man receives from God no gracious impulses or spiritual emotions to be turned to naught. This constitutes our responsibility. He will, at the judgment day, call on every one of us to know what we have gained by trading; what we have gained for ourselves in the way of strength and comfort; what we have gained for him in the way of influence and good accomplished for others or for the church.

(2.) If we are called to bear office in God's earthly kingdom, and providential circumstances have so favored us that we had opened a wide door of usefulness; if we have been provided with powers of intellect that would make us efficient instruments in the work of Zion; if we have been gifted with natural or acquired faculties of mind or heart by which to make our efforts felt among men; if this be true, can we suppose for a moment, that God will not hold us accountable for the way in which we improve these graces? Surely not. These conditions are the gifts of our Creator and King; the gifts intended to be used for his kingdom; and he must know what we have done with them.

4. Some men use these graces well, while others use them badly, as some of these servants made their pound gain ten pounds, and others made their talents double themselves, while one allowed his pound to lie idle, and another made no use of his talent.

(1.) So is it with the graces. One man will act so promptly upon the suggestions and movings of the Spirit that he comes at once into the possession of secret peace and joy, and a bright hope. From this he will go on to a higher and a still higher degree of comfort and strength, and beauty of character, until he becomes an ornament to religion and a pillar in the church, and men rise up on every hand to call him blessed.

But in the same neighborhood—yea, in the same church—there may be a man who, though enjoying equal privileges, and wrought upon by the same Holy Spirit, is yet slow, and dull, and lifeless. He finds not the joy to which believers are entitled. He develops

not unto a sprightly precept and forcible example. He finds no good to himself in religion; much less does he make it the agent of good to others.

(2.) Again, one officer in the church will be like a vine, ever growing; maturing more and more fruit; taking up more and more arduous duties; getting daily more and more accustomed to the ecclesiastical harness; until he is a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

Another officer, from false modesty, or feigned timidity, or enforced diffidence, will lag back; plead incapacity; wait for others to go forward; shun the cross that lies in his path;—and after a score of years, you find him just where he was at the beginning.

4. The unfaithful try to excuse themselves, as did the servant with the one pound, and he with the one talent.

(1.) There are men who give as a reason why they have not grown more in religion, that more is demanded of them than they are able to perform. God is a hard Master. They are required to repent; and yet, without God's grace, they cannot do so; to believe, while God only can work in them to will; and so on. They say they do as well as they can.

The infidel, the impenitent, the unbelieving, the immoral—none of them have any conception of the reprehensible nature of their conduct, or the immense weight of their responsibility to God. "They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."

(2.) So it is with inefficient church officers. They

excuse themselves because they do not feel their responsibility. They do not as much as others, because, they say, they have not the opportunity, or have not the capacity, or have not the heart and courage, or are afraid they will fail. If they could only know that they are required to put even their pound to the exchangers, and gain from it by trading, by active effort, they would never dream of trying to make excuses.

5. Men who improve their graces will be rewarded, and those who do not, will be punished.

(1.) It is a reward to the earnest child of God to receive the welcome applaudit: "Well done, good and faithful servant." It is a reward to have a clear conscience: to know that we please God; to find from communion with God sweet encouragement to persevere and hope to the end; to be made rulers over many things; rulers by faith over adversity; rulers by grace over ourselves; rulers by the witness of the Spirit over doubts and fears; rulers by prayer over even providences. And when we do sometimes have to succumb to trial and temptation, or sorrow, it is a reward to have the assurance, that by and by we shall overcome and be rulers.

(2.) It is a reward for a church officer to be promoted in points of honor and influence in the church; to know that when he dies, though during his life no fruit did accrue from his labors, yet his works will follow him,—his influence will be unending, telling upon generation after generation, through all time and eternity. It is a reward to know that "God is not unfaithful to forget our works and labors of love." But it will be the greatest reward to the zealous worker for

God, that "he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied," entering thus, like Jesus, into the joy of his Lord; the joy of an easy conscience, because he has been faithful; the joy of triumph, because he shall overcome; the joy of love, because he loves and is loved.

(3.) But the unfaithful man who does not improve his graces will be punished. It is a punishment to have God, through our consciences, reprove us for neglect and indolence; to have God accuse us of not living up to our light and privilege; to have God deny us his favor, and say: "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone;" to have God make us hunger-bitter, in longing for the mercy which can never become ours. It is a puishment to feel a famine of the word; to know that we cumber the ground; to be cast into outer darkness and despair. Our punishment may not, in any degree, be temporal or physical, but it will be all the more severe, because spiritual. Our punishment may not be for gross violation of law, but we become equally guilty when we bury our talent or hide away our pound by neglect and indifference.

(4.) The office bearer who is unfaithful, receives his punishment in the loss of pleasure sustained from not being actively engaged to a good and great end, in the condemning voice of his own conscience, telling him he is wicked in being slothful; telling him that he has suffered gracious opportunities to slip by; telling him that he is not in his Master's loving favor. It is a puishment to see his uselessness in the church, to feel himself to be an officer only in name; to know that, though he has not been deprived of his office posi-

tively, yet virtually God has taken from him his bishopric, and bestowed its honors and opportunities upon others.

II. We will now look at some of *the peculiar features of each class of these graces;* for though in many respects their properties are so similar, there are many dissimilarities. Just as these parables are so much alike, and yet so much unlike.

1. Consider the author of these graces. He who distributed the talents was only a man, the master of a house. He who distributed the pounds was a nobleman—a presumptive king.

(1.) The author of spiritual graces is the *man*, Christ Jesus. He who works in us the thoughts and feelings of Christians, is a man possessing like passions with ourselves, sin excepted. Hence the Samaritan woman said: "Come, see a *man* which told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" Jesus reveals himself to the sinner as a man—as a divine man, indeed, but it is the *man* that makes the revelation effectual to all the ends of salvation. A revelation as from God alone would overpower the senses, and further estrange the soul. The feelings awakened by religion are pre-eminently human feelings—feelings that take hold upon Jesus as a *man*, rather than as a God. The sinner becomes allied to Christ in a way similar to that by which he becomes allied to a fellow-man. He becomes identified with Christ just as he does with his fellow-man.

(2.) But it is not so with the gifts or graces of office. These come from God as a king. They are superior. They are royal. They are delegated. They

are not natural, but divine. They are tokens of promotion to a position of authority. When Jesus calls a man to become a disciple, he simply calls to union and communion with himself. But when he called the twelve to become apostles, he called to official duties and trusts.

2. Consider the recipients. In one case, it seems to be all the servants; in the other, only a select few.

(1.) All God's people are endowed with spiritual and saving graces; but all are not to become officers and rulers in the church. Christ never intended that the government of his church should be absolutely democratic. Though all spiritual graces are offered to every one, official graces are bestowed upon only the few.

(2.) As Christians, men have graces according to capacity; some more than others. But as officers, all incumbents are equal in power and authority. Jesus never designed that any *one* should lord it over God's heritage. He never intended that the government of his church should be monarchical. There were ten servants, and each one received a pound; to them in joint capacity, he said: "Occupy till I come."

3. Notice the use made of these graces. The holders of the talents all made one hundred per cent. profit. He who received five talents, made five more; and he who received two, made two more. But the holders of the pounds made different per cents. One made one thousand per cent., his pound gaining ten pounds. Another made five hundred per cent., his pound gaining five pounds.

(1.) All true and sincere Christians—all who heartily accept of Christ by faith, will win Heaven. Every

such one is esteemed as righteous, and an heir to the kingdom of glory. One true Christian *deserves* no more than another. All any one can do as a ground for reward, is to trust in Jesus. All Christians make the same returns to God, viz., all of grace and none of works. One may labor eleven hours, and another only one, but God will give to both alike, viz., what he promised, eternal life and perfect happiness. What did Paul gain by all his labors more than the thief on the cross? Both gained Paradise. Paul may see more to admire and enjoy in that Paradise. But the thief admires and enjoys to the fullness of his capacity what he sees.

(2.) But church officers vary in degrees of efficiency. One may deserve ten times more commendation from God than another, as an officer. One may do ten times more to the advancement of God's cause than another. One may use his authority to tenfolds more advantage than another, though that authority be equal in extent.

(3.) Again it is the privilege and duty of a church officer to do manifold more good than a private Christian. The latter may be the means of converting one soul, but the former has the means of converting a thousand. His authority, his superior endowments, his relation to God as an ambassabor—all this makes him more able to do God's work than if he were not an officer.

(4.) The hypocrite or unbeliever tries not to see or know his responsibility. He tries to put it out of sight in the hole of pleasure, or business, or society. But the church officer, who fails to fill his office, lays up his graces in a napkin—the napkin of modesty, or

timidity, or cowardice, or slothfulness. He does not entirely give up his office in the church, but he exercises it to no advantage.

4. Notice also the settlements made.

(1.) Those who received the talents, and were faithful and diligent in using them, were commended, and made rulers over many things, and invited to enter into the joys of their Lord. Those who received the pounds, and were faithful, were praised, and promoted to be rulers over cities, but nothing is said about entering into the master's joy.

So it is, the man who tries to live a pure and useful Christian life will be commended, and clothed with the power and strength of divine grace, so that he will become conqueror, and more than conqueror, over many evils within and without, and over many mysteries and problems of revelation and godliness. He will become partaker with Christ in the joys of true holiness, of union and communion with God, of hopes and prospects for eternity, of the indwelling conciousness of union with God and conformity to his image, and finally of a glorious resurrection and a heavenly crown and throne. This is the way in which God will reward the Christian.

But the reward given to the good and true church officer, while it may and does include all this, yet goes beyond it. God promotes such an one. He opens up before him wider avenues of usefulness and honor. He strengthens and enlarges his influence for good. He gives him force of character, and authority, so that he is looked up to as a leader and commander for the people. By virtue of his office, he has power with men and even with God.

(2.) But the unfaithful man with the talent was deprived of his talent, and turned over to the tormentor, while the man with the neglected pound is only deprived of his pound.

So the man who is false to the care and love of God in giving him means of being and doing good, and who desires the claims of religion, this one will be deprived of his spiritual opportunities, and feelings, and promptings, and be doomed to the eternal blackness and despair of hell.

But a church officer may, perhaps, be unfaithful as such, and yet, though weak, be a true child of God, and so be delivered, as by fire, from hell. His punishment will consist in being deprived of his office. Men may still give it to him, but God will make it barren. The man will have only the name, and not the power—the gracious power—of an officer under Christ Jesus.

APPLICATION.

How great the responsibility of all men!

1. For all men receive some degrees of grace. Hence we are told, that when we appear before God every mouth will be stopped. No one can say: "I was not moved upon by God to cease from evil and learn to do well." I may not receive as frequent and impressive calls as another, but I have received enough to save me, had I only heeded their voice. So that every man is responsible to God. If any one is lost, it is his own fault.

2. How great especially is the responsibility of church officers! They are to occupy in Christ's place until he come. All the powers of government are not

placed in their hands, any more than this lord gave all his money to the ten servants. But their power is very great. They have the keys of the kingdom; they can shut and no man can open; they can open and no man can shut. It is with them, whether the visible church be pure or impure; peaceable or in strife; united or divided; prosperous or inefficient.

PART SECOND.

RELIGION IN THE HEART.

EXPERIENCE.

SERMON V.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE: "THE TOWER BUILDER," AND "THE KING GOING TO BATTLE."

SERMON VI.

RELIGIOUS GROWTH: "THE MUSTARD SEED," AND "THE LEAVEN."

SERMON VII.

TRUE AND FALSE RIGHTEOUSNESS: "THE PRODIGAL SON," AND "THE PUBLICAN."

SERMON VIII.

RELIGION DEVELOPED AND UNDEVELOPED: "THE HID TREASURE," AND "THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."

SERMON V.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE.

"The Tower-Builder." (Luke xiv. 28–30.)
"The King Going to War." (Luke xiv. 31, 32.)

1. WE find in the 33rd verse what may be called an application of these two parables: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." At first glance it is difficult to tell what connection it has with the parables. The idea is this: The cost of serving Jesus is the giving-up of every worldly interest as such. But we will not do this until we realize the advantage of this step to our souls. In order, therefore, to become ready to follow Jesus, we must consider well the results.

1. Both these parables evidently convey the same general thought, viz.: the importance of counting the cost of what we are about to undertake.

2. To the man who contemplates the Christian life, two objects present themselves for his accomplishment, viz.: to build a tower for ornament and defense, and to wage a warfare against an enemy. Before he undertake these objects, he is urged to consider well whether he shall be able to effect the ends aimed at. Whenever he becomes sure that he can carry on the work, he should undertake it, and not before. That is, the Christian must have assurance of grace.

The subject, therefore, presented by these two parables is Assurance of Grace.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE.

There is another kind of assurance, viz.: assurance of faith. By this is meant the confident feeling that we are Christians. But by assurance of grace is meant the confident feeling that, though we are not able to save ourselves, yet God is both able and willing to save us. And we are told here how we may attain this.

I. We must REALIZE THE GREATNESS OF THE WORK TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

1. We are required to *build a tower*. The Christian is, in many places of Scripture, represented as a builder. For instance, in Psalms, where it is written, "Except the Lord build the house, *they labor in vain that build it*." Then the Saviour says: "He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them is like *a man that built his house* upon a rock." Then Paul says, "Let every man take heed how he *buildeth*." So here he is represented as building a tower.

Now a tower is for two purposes, ornament and defense. Christ is called our High Tower, because he is the ornament of our life and character, and our defense.

(1.) The Christian must be *adorned with* a character for *piety* and *godliness* before both God and men.

When God looks upon us, he must see no blemish in our lives. Every act, and word, and thought must be holy and pure.

No man must find in our conduct any cause for reproaching us as inconsistent. We must appear to men as zealous for religion and morality, and as exhibiting in our walk and conversation, fruit most worthy of the Christian profession which we have made.

(2.) We must *prepare for defending ourselves* against our enemy. We must realize that there will be many and severe temptations to do wrong, and give up duty; that there will be various discouragements and trials. There will be easily besetting sins to overcome. Our desire for ease will tempt us to neglect some work which the master requires.

We will be afflicted, and bereaved, and troubled; and we must realize the necessity of prepâring for a defense of ourselves against these things.

2. We are required to *engage in a warfare.* Many passages of God's word so represent Christian life. It is not enough for us simply to prepare for defense, we must make the conflict an actively aggressive one. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood," etc. Our enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

(1.) *The world will oppose* all our endeavors to lead a Christian life. We must defend ourselves, and at the same time strive to break down the power of the world over others.

We must turn a deaf ear to the allurements of the world, calling to sinful pleasures and unholy aspirations, and unsanctified riches. We must guard others against these enticements, and endeavor to win them over to the more laudable pursuits of true godliness.

Thus we are to fight the world, to put it down in our own hearts, and in society, and in the church.

(2.) *Self* will resist our service for Christ; fostering lusts contradictory to holiness, and that seek for growth and development in our bodies and in our minds.

We are to oppose and overcome these lusts. They must not exist even in the imaginations and emotions;

much less must they be nurtured in our physical natures.

We must mortify our bodies by self-denial, and rob self of its food, by being unselfish and charitable in everything.

All this will take a battle—yea, many a battle. For we are not only to protect ourselves against this enemy, but we are to drive him out wholly.

Our inward foes are like the Amalekites to Israel—they must every one be not only driven away from us, but they must be destroyed.

(3.) *Satan* will do his utmost to keep us from pleasing God, or getting to Heaven, or helping others to get there. We are to fight against all his vile suggestions, and oppose any and every form of evil teaching or evil doing among men.

To accomplish all this will require a great deal of knowledge respecting ourselves and human nature, and the spirit world and revelation. It will require much patience, prayer, and watching, together with the greatest diligence in the use of the means of grace, a world of perseverance and energy, and exquisite tact, and special talent, and mature thought.

We are to realize that he who is not with Christ is against him; that we cannot serve God and mammon; that we must be wholly on the Lord's side, or wholly against him; that it will be no easy matter to be a consistent Christian; and that it will require superhuman strength and supernatural vigilance.

Thus it is, we are to count the cost of building the spiritual tower. Thus it is, we are to take counsel with ourselves before going into the spiritual warfare. Thus

we calculate what will be the expenses of the building, and what is the strength of the army arrayed against us.

II. We must REALIZE WHAT IS OUR CAPACITY, and what available means are at our disposal. This will lead us to carefully consider our own faculties of soul and the purport of God's promises for grace.

1. We must *realize our own weakness.* Experience and observation both teach it to us.

(1.) We will recall the fact that *we have often failed* in such undertakings. We will think of broken resolutions, of unaccomplished plans, and of falls into sins against which we have set ourselves. And we cannot but feel that the same or like results will take place again.

(2.) We will recall the fact that *we have seen* or heard of others who showed their *inefficiency for moral reformation.* We will understand how strong is an inherited disposition, or an old confirmed habit.

In this way, we will find that we have not enough means to build the tower, and that our forces are not sufficiently strong or numerous to withstand the great power of our enemy.

2. But are there not *other resources* upon which we can rely? Have we not learned that God's grace will enable us—has enabled many a man to do those things which are required of Christians? When our funds are exhausted, we can draw from the riches of God's grace. When our strength is small, we may obtain recruiting from the inexhaustible supplies ever with God. Feeling thus, that there is no deficiency of re-

sources, we will be confident of success, and have no fear of failure.

It takes all this to constitute the proper frame of mind in entering upon the career of a Christian. Here is conviction; here is knowledge; here is faith; here is hope.

APPLICATION.

1. One of the evidences that we have assurance of grace, is *a determined resolution.* What we build on the tower to-day may fall to-night, but we know that we have an abundant backing in God's treasury of grace; and so we will not be discouraged, but will go forward to build up again.

We may be defeated to-day on the battle-field, where self, or the world, or Satan, with a host, met us in deadly conflict. But we know that we have plenty of reserves in the legions of divine grace. So we only fall back to rally again for another contest. Like Israel, we may be repulsed before some Ai. But like Israel, we will humble ourselves in prayer, and penitence, and faith, and strive to so prepare ourselves that the like will not occur again.

This determination to go forward is the soul's evidence that we have counted the cost. We will ask ourselves, "Why should we give up this work? In our Father's house there is plenty and to spare. I will arise and go on again." There may be times when, like the Psalmist, we will feel like saying, "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, 'Where is thy God?'" But with the Psalmist, we will find comfort and encourage-

ment in this thought: "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

2. But the best evidence that we have counted the cost, is *perseverance.* Suppose we are engaged for a score of years in trying to build up one grace-wing of this Tower, and the work progresses so slowly that one would think it impossible. Yet we will be willing to keep on another score of years. For have we not in God's promised grace most abundant encouragement to hope that all will, in the end, be well?

Suppose we fail in a ten years' siege of the castle of some besetting sin. We will not consent to raise the siege. For have we not in God's grace ample guaranty that when we have compassed the castle the full number of times, God will cause the walls to fall down, and give us the victory?

3. The reason why so many begin to build, and give it up, and thus incur the ridicule of the world; the reason why so many go out in battle array against the soul's enemies, and are defeated—yea, destroyed—the reason is *they do not count the cost.*

Perhaps they did not think of all that would be required of them; did not think of the power of Satan and self, and the world.

Or, perhaps, they may have thought of all this, but did not know how weak they were in themselves to meet these foes, or do this work. They thought they had more ability than was the true state of the case.

Or, perhaps, they never did get a deep and abiding impression of the vast riches of grace which are in Christ Jesus, and trust themselves wholly to this.

4. O how many there are of whom the world is con-

tinually saying: "This man began to build and was not able to finish." I know an old house in this county that makes me think of this parable every time I see it. It was begun scores of years ago; begun on a magnificent plan. There are great princely halls, and numerous roomy chambers, and splendid parlors, and costly bay windows, and elegant towers, and spacious galleries, with fancy balconies, and beautiful mouldings, and all manner of carvings and etchings—indeed, every thing to make a superb edifice. It shows the generous conceptions of the builder. But alas! alas! it was never finished, and it stands to-day decayed and shattered,—almost ready to fall. "This man began to build and was not able to finish." So have I thought, as I have looked at some men. Years and years ago, they set out to build for Jesus the tower of piety and godliness. They began in a liberal way. They were "bright and shining lights," and many were willing "for a season to rejoice in their light." They promised much. They did run well. But there was one besetting sin, for the overcoming of which they did not count the cost. They never computed how much self-denial was necessary; how much humility was required; how much prayer; how much fasting; how much penitence. And that unfinished part of their characters has spoiled all the building. After long years, they fall as helpless victims before that sin. The world says: "This man began to build, and was not able to finish."

But the world never says that of one whom it finds ever present at his work. The devil may tear down what he does, but because he tries to build it up again,

and never becomes disheartened, all who behold him bear testimony to his stability of character.

Let us, then, seek for this Assurance of Grace as the first step towards assurance of faith and assurance of heaven.

SERMON VI.

RELIGIOUS GROWTH.

"The Mustard Seed." (Matt. xiii. 31, 32; Mark iv. 30–32; Luke xiii. 19.)

"The Leaven." (Matt. xiii. 33; Luke xiii. 20, 21.)

1. WE call attention to the fact that the first parable speaks of the mustard seed only, except some incidental circumstances; but the second speaks of the leaven in its relation to the meal.

2. In the study of the first, that of the Mustard Seed, though one person, taking Matthew and Luke for his guides, may place emphasis on the importance of the sowing; and another, taking Mark, the idea of smallness in the beginning; and though one may invite special attention from Matthew and Mark's words, to the fact that the result is only an herb; and another may consider that as unimportant in the exposition; and another may emphasize the greatness in strength; and another the luxuriance: yet no one can properly trace the mind of the Spirit, who fails to make the idea of growth the nucleus around which the illustration gathers, and to which every other thought is to be adapted. So is it with the latter parable. The Leaven grows from a small portion, until three bushels are leavened.

3. The general truth of growth being thus plainly

derived, we come to inquire what spiritual connection it has: to what religious idea is it to be applied?

There are two principles of righteousness. It is written by John, of Jesus, that he was "full of grace and truth." These are the two principles to which the parables refer. The truth grows; the grace in the heart grows.

I. The parable of the Mustard Seed teaches the growth of grace and truth in the abstract.

II. The parable of the Leaven teaches the expulsive power of these principles as they grow.

I. Truth and grace make ABSOLUTE PROGRESS. Truth will go forth in its conquest of the world to God, and grace in the heart will grow.

1. These principles, like the Mustard Seed, have *a small beginning.*

(1.) The history of the church and of Christian life, shows this to be true. God revealed his will at first to a very small part of the human family, when he gave the law and prophecies to Israel. Every Christian's knowledge of himself and of God, is, in the beginning, very limited. He learns first, as it were, his a, b, c's.

God manifested his mercy and holiness to a mere fraction of the human family, when he established his church in Abraham and his seed. The Holy Spirit plants in the soul the tiny germs of grace, in attention, and consideration, and penitence. The sinner first sees "men as trees walking." The child of God crawls before he walks.

(2.) The teaching of the Bible is to the same purport.

The beginning of a Christian's life is called regener-

ation. We are begotten into God's family. It is called a new birth. The sinner is born a son of God. The progress of truth and grace is compared to the sunlight, beginning with a dawn, and succeeded by the day.

(3.) That religious principles begin small, is derived from analogy: like all the works of Deity, that have their period of germhood, so to speak; like the rivers that begin with a fountain; like the great oaks that spring from acorns; like extensive continents that were once insignificent islands; like the animal world that had its infancy.

The world cannot be expected to come to Christ in a day. We cannot hope to see holiness become prevalent over the earth in a year. We cannot expect the benighted sinner to know his duties and dangers in an hour. We cannot expect the disciple of Jesus to be an expert in godliness from the very outset.

2. But the principles of religion, though small in the beginning like the mustard seed, will, like that seed, *grow*. It is natural for them to do so. They cannot stand still. They cannot decay, for they are incorruptible seed.

(1.) In this respect, they are compared to animal growth. "When I was a child, I spake, etc., as a child, but when I became a man, etc." The young convert is called a babe in Christ, and after a time, is spoken of as being capable of taking strong meat.

(2.) The development of these principles is compared to vegetable growth: Like the vine; like the seed planted, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear;" like the tree whose leaves cannot wither, and that bringeth forth its fruit in its season.

The plants of truth and grace grow, until, like the fowls of the air in the branches, thoughts akin to Godhead find a harbor in our minds; and feelings and emotions worthy of angels, take shelter, and find nourishment, and receive support, and establish residence in our hearts.

II. The parable of the Leaven, while representing the growth of religious principles, does not, like that of the Mustard Seed, refer to their absolute, but to their RELATIVE PROGRESS. It shows how these principles destroy all traces of evil.

They accomplish this by controlling the faculties of the heart and mind, so that they are exercised in the interests of religion, while other interests are left to become dwarfed and die. As a crop may be ruined by letting the grass grow and taking away the soil-properties from it.

1. The grace-root of *love*, or charity, enters the heart, and controlling the thoughts and affections in its own interests, the plants of hatred, variance, strife, and so on, lose their vitality.

2. The grace-root of *chastity*, or purity, strikes into the soul, and by regulating the powers thereof, prevents the maturity of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, and such like.

3. The grace-root of *love for divine worship* penetrates the heart and mind, and so over rules all their energies, that they have nothing with which to sustain idolatry or infidelity. The idols of wood or stone, or flesh, or anything else, sit up in their temples so neglected that they go to decay.

4. The grace-root of *joy in the Holy Ghost*, or of

delight in religious work or experience, finds a place in the man's life, and everything else is so brought under its influence that there is no longer any pleasure in carnal things, and all such delights are left out in the cold to freeze for want of patronage.

As the Leaven leavened the meal by bringing under its control all the ingredients contained therein, so grace purifies the heart and life of every one of its subjects.

APPLICATION.

1. It does not require much knowledge, or strength either, to begin to be a Christian. We must not "despise the day of small things." What God asks of us is to act upon the first impulse of the Spirit. We are not to be prevented from embarking in the Christian life, because we imagine great things are expected of us. Religious experience has often times an infinitely small beginning.

2. A salutary lesson to be learned from these two parables, is that, if our knowledge of spiritual things and our graces do not grow, they are, doubtless, false. "If ye abide in me," says Christ, "ye shall bear much fruit." That growth shall be manifested by an increased appreciation of Scripture doctrines, because better understood and more personally appropriated; by a greater desire to conform to God's will, and ability to do so, and by being daily weaned away from all that was once attractive and pleasing to the carnal nature.

SERMON VII.

TRUE AND FALSE RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"The Prodigal Son." (Luke xv. 11–32.)
"The Pharisee and Publican." (Luke xviii. 9–14.)

1. THESE parables are in many respects similar. (1.) The object aimed at by the Saviour in speaking them was one. The parable of the Pharisee and Publican was spoken to certain ones "which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." Such a man was the Pharisee. And we find the same disposition in the elder son.

The parable of the Prodigal was spoken in answer to the cavil of the Jews that Jesus mingled too freely with the publicans and sinners. Such a man was the elder son. And we find the same disposition in the Pharisee.

(2.) In both these parables we discover the same two classes of persons. In the one, we find the self-righteous represented by the Pharisee; in the other, by the elder son. The penitent sinner is represented in one case by the Publican, and in the other by the Prodigal.

(3.) Both of these parables reveal the same spirit in the penitent. The Prodigal feels and confesses his faults. The Publican does the same.

(4.) In both we see the self-righteous man exhibiting the same trait of character. The Pharisee's self-righteousness makes him speak in a vain manner of

his own goodness. The elder son expresses precisely the same thoughts and feelings, though in different words.

2. These two parables are, however, complemental to each other. They are, in the main, on the same subject, but each presents that subject from a different standpoint.

(1.) We get distinct and separate views of the character of the self-righteous man.

In the Pharisee, the self-righteous man, though seeming to be prayerful, is really not so. There is not a word of petition in what he says.

In the elder son, the self-righteous man is seen to undervalue God's grace and mercy.

(2.) We get different ideas of the penitent sinner.

In the conduct of the Publican, we see that mercy is the plea which the penitent makes at God's hand. He never thinks of justice. And he pleads mercy through atonement. For this is the meaning of the words, "Have mercy!" It is, "Accept an atonement for me."

In the conduct of the Prodigal, we find that the cause which leads the sinner to repent and beg for mercy is love. This was what made the Prodigal take the resolve to go home. This love, seen in the father's reception, was what made him able to carry out that resolution.

(3.) We get distinct ideas of God. In the parable of the Publican and Pharisee, God is represented to us as justifying the sinner. In that of the Prodigal, God is set forth as pardoning the sinner. Pardon is the result of justification. There could be no pardon without the preceding justification.

(4.) We derive from these parables separate views of the relation between God and the penitent.

In the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, we see the sinner at God's altar, worshipping and glorifying God.

In the story of the Prodigal, we see the sinner in his father's house, and at his father's table, enjoying God.

3. From all this, we derive the general topic:

True and False Righteousness.

I. What is false righteousness? The double picture presented here will give us a satisfactory answer.

1. It *may have morality and correct living.* The Pharisee was a model of uprightness—religious, charitable, temperate. The elder son was obedient, faithful, self-denying. Yet neither of them is commended as an example to be followed by us in seeking favor with God. Besides, we are expressly told that our "righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees."

2. False righteousness *thinks well of itself*, and despises others. It does not doubt its own genuineness. It lets its left hand know what its right hand doeth. It treasures up its good and correct doings. It does not find fault with itself. It justifies itself. It praises itself. It does not esteem others better than itself. "Others are not converted, but I am. Others do not know the time and place, but I do. Others are ashamed to pray in public, but I am not. Others are doubtful about going to heaven, but I am not. I never go into bad company like that man. I have family

worship, and that man does not. I read my Bible daily, but he does not."

That is the way false righteousness talks and thinks.

It estimates a professed Christian's character by comparing it with what itself is. It looks at the outside alone. It has not charity enough to consider that:

> "Down in the human heart,
> Crushed by the tempter,
> Feelings lie buried that grace can restore."

It looked for fruit at the wrong time; or in the wrong place; or of the wrong kind. When there should be only blooms, it looks for figs. When the fruit grows underground, it looks for it on the top branches. It looks for grafted fruit; fine, showy, when they are only seedlings, small indeed, and somewhat inferior, but withal good fruit.

3. False righteousness *underestimates* the richness of *God's goodness and mercy and grace.* It uses words expressive of thankfulness, but it is only thankful that it makes the fair appearance it does. It takes credit to itself for what it is, or has, or does, instead of giving the praise to God. If any one is not as good as he is, he thinks it is the man's own fault. He does not give God the glory for being as good and holy as he is.

It cannot understand how God can be so merciful as to bear with men who are profligate and trifling. He cannot see how God can be so full of grace as to pardon certain heinous and aggravated sinners.

He has not such a sense of God's goodness, as to make him grateful for adversity and calamity. He has

not such a sense of God's mercy, as to make him deeply humbled with a feeling of his own unworthiness. He has not such a sense of God's grace, as to make him feel that he needs God every day and hour and moment. He prizes not imputed righteousness, as much as he does self-righteousness. He feels not so dependent, as independent. He feels not so humble, as proud. He is not so hopeful, as confident. He does not trust, so much as he is sure. He does not fear, so much as he presumes. He does not pray, so much as he boasts. He does not love, so much as he judges, and finds fault, and criticizes. He is shameless, self-assertive, self-important, self-assured, forward, boisterous, verbose.

II. Here we find, in a positive way, WHAT TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS.

For it is not enough to say it is the opposite of false righteousness. It is not enough to say it gives humble views of self; or that it gives all the glory to God; or that it puts a true estimate upon divine mercy and love.

1. We are led to consider *the relations that it establishes between God and the sinner.*

(1.) It brings the sinner to God's altar as a worshipper. He worships God rather than self. Note the difference between the worship of the Pharisee and that of the publican. The thought suggested by the former, is "all of self, and none of God." That suggested by the latter, is "none of self, and all of God."

(2.) True righteousness brings the sinner into the Heavenly Father's house, and seats him at God's table. There is intimate communion between God and the righteous. While the self-righteous man stays out of

the feast, the righteous man enters into it. While the former encourages and gives way to a feeling of estrangement, the latter is in the very bosom of the Holy Family. The former finds fault, and therefore does not enjoy God. The latter honors God and all men, and finds fault only with himself, and so enjoys God. The former detracts from the joy of communion. The latter adds to it. The conduct of the former makes others unhappy; that of the latter makes others happy. The former displeases, the latter pleases, God.

2. We are led to consider *the views which true righteousness gives us of God.*

(1.) He is presented to us as a God that justifies the believer. The truly righteous are released from all blame and censure on account of sin. The Holy Spirit's seal is upon his heart, as the Prodigal wore the ring upon his finger. He feels that he is a child of God. He appropriates the promises of the gospel of peace, as the Prodigal had shoes put on his feet. He is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, as the Prodigal had the best robe put upon him.

(2.) God is presented as a God that pardons. Pardon is the result of justification. The sinner, being justified, is pardoned. There is in his ears a voice of forgiveness. There is in his soul a feeling of peace. He knows and realizes that he does not deserve it, and yet he rejoices in the assurance that it is so.

3. *The truly righteous man has feelings that bring him to God.*

(1.) He feels that God is love. He does not fear his wrath. He thinks only of His goodness and grace. What he sees in creation, and providence, and

redemption impresses him with the thought of divine compassion and mercy.

(2.) He feels that he is very guilty, and needs mercy. He sees his danger and corruption. He sees Christ as his atonement, and mediator, and propitiation. He is lost and undone, and can go to none other—can hope in none but God in Christ. Then behold how earnest the righteous man is! how modest! how quiet! how contrite! how submissive! how humble!

Application.

1. There is one very important lesson for us to learn from these two parables, viz.: without sincere repentance for sin, we can not glorify or worship God. Without this, what honors we render to Him are not acceptable. Without this, we can not enjoy God. Without this, there is no peace of conscience or sense of the divine favor, or possession of heaven at last.

Repentance is the very soul of active religion, and the secret of experimental piety. It will bring us to the sanctuary; make us prayerful; drive us away from being keepers of the devil's service; cause us to loathe the husks of lust, and passion, and pride; give us a welcome with God; make us to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; put on our souls the seal of the Holy Ghost; clothe us with the best robe; seat us at the Father's table, the marriage supper of the Lamb, and make us participants of the bliss of heaven.

2. One of the surest evidences that we are not self-righteous is, we are charitable toward all men. For there can be no charity where there is self-righteous-

ness. If we are truly righteous, we do not despise the poor, the erring, the weak, the prodigal, the dissolute; but we will sympathize with them, try to help them, be patient toward them, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted."

SERMON VIII.

RELIGION DEVELOPED AND UNDEVELOPED.

"The Hid Treasure." (Matt. xiii. 44.)
"The Pearl of Great Price." (Matt. xiii. 45, 46.)

1. LET us get at the general truth set forth by these two parables.

(1.) The object in both is to show how the end aimed at was reached, viz.: the getting of the treasure. Both men found the treasure by seeking for it. When they had found it, they sold all they had and bought it.

(2.) This is to be applied to the question: "How am I to get religion?" We are to get it by seeking for it, and by consecrating all we have to its purposes and ends. Religion is presented as a treasure—a treasure for a time concealed from our apprehension and appreciation; a treasure found and enjoyed only when sought for; a treasure procured at the sacrifice of everything else.

2. But each one of these parables represents religion to us in a different light from the other; and the key to that difference is found in the words "pearl" and "treasure hid in a field."

(1.) The parable of the Pearl of Great Price sets forth religion under the figure of a developed treasure as the beginning of Christian experience—the first realization of the Christian's hope.

(2.) The parable of the Hid Treasure presents religion

under the figure of a gold mine, as capable of infinite development.

(3.) As the merchantman sought the pearl, expecting to find it ready to be enjoyed at the moment of possession, so the sinner whose mind begins to turn to God, seeks religion, as the Christian's hope, as a perfect realization. The merchantman didn't seek for something that he must use to get the good out of it So the anxious sinner seeks conversion as a complete possession in itself, and not as something which he is to work up to make it valuable.

But the man seeking the Hid Treasure, or the gold mine, aimed at the possession of a treasure which he could develop into immense wealth by use. So, after a sinner is converted, having gotten the pearl, he seeks the mine. He seeks the enjoyment of religion, as something that he can work up to great and still greater degrees of value.

3. Now just as these men obtained possession of these treasures, we are to get and enjoy religion.

I. We are to find it.

II. We are to buy it at a sacrifice.

I. If we wish to obtain THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE OR JOYS, WE MUST FIND them.

These men did not accidentally come upon these treasures. The man mentioned in verse 44, was doubtless a regular gold hunter. He was seeking for a gold mine. The merchant was seeking for pearls.

So religion is not gotten by accident. We must seek for it.

1. A certain *state of mind is necessary* Our atten-

tion and interest must be concentrated on religion, if we would have it. It must be made our sole business.

(1.) We must have no business that *conflicts* with this. Suppose a man sets out to make temperance lectures and at the same time is a whiskey drummer. There is a conflict of business, and a failure must result.

Suppose a man pretends to seek for religion, and is, all the time, seeking for sinful pleasures. Will he not fail in the matter of religion? How can a man get religion and live in the gratification of licentious passions? or give way to his impatience in oaths and swearing? or continue to defraud his fellowmen? or indulge in deceit and falsehood?

(2.) We must not have any business that *diverts* our mind from religion. An agent is required by his employer to confine himself to one line of goods. If he is to sell the publications of one house, he must not be a general colporteur.

So, if the sinner wants to get religion, he must not do anything to divert him from it. If he farms, let him do it in the interests of religion. If he practices law or medicine, or sells goods, let him have an eye single to the glory of God in the salvation of souls.

The man seeking a mine, no doubt, often sought food or water, or lodging, or protection from some evil, or for different kinds of forest growth or soils, yet all in subserviency to the gold hunting. He may have indulged in temporary recreations or diversions; but he never lost sight of his work.

So let it be with men seeking religion. Let them be like the merchantman, carry their valise, buy their

travelling ticket, check their baggage, chat with fellow-passengers, seek rooms at hotels, enjoy the scenery by the way, read the dailies, take refreshments, and so on. But let their eye be single; let them do and enjoy all such things in the interest of the religion they seek.

2. There are certain *restrictions and regulations for* the successful *seeking of religion.* The miner has certain kinds of localities and modes of procedure, in which to seek a mine. So has the merchantman seeking pearls. Agents generally have their territory assigned to them, and the rules and limitations necessary to the success of their work.

So must it be in religion. There are certain places and ways in which to seek.

(1.) It is to be *sought by* the use of the words of truth. This is the instrument used by the Holy Spirit for regeneration and sanctification. It must be read and heard diligently. Seeking for the hope of the Christian or the joys of religion, and neglecting the Word, is like a miner seeking a mine regardless of localities.

(2.) Religion is to be sought by *prayer.* To neglect this, and expect to be converted, or grow in grace, is like a merchantman seeking pearls, who does not know a pearl from a common rock; like a gold hunter seeking a mine without his instruments or like a drummer, without his samples,

(3.) But especially must religion be sought *at the foot of the cross.* We may read our Bible until we are gray; we may pray until we grow deaf and dumb, and yet if we come not to the foot of the cross, where Jesus died, where the blood of atonement flows, we will never

be converted, or enjoy religion. There only, will we see what guilty sinners we are; how helpless; how willing God is to pardon; how able God is to help; how odious is sin; how glorious is holiness.

In short, we are to seek religion with a determined heart and mind, in the use of the means of grace, and through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. But many A SINNER FINDS RELIGION, WHO DOES NOT GET IT. There is many a man who thinks religion is a good thing, and is almost persuaded to become a Christian; but he puts it off, and to-day he has not religion in possession. Many a man professes to be a Christian, and is a Christian, but has never had any realization of Christian experience; he never felt any change of mind or of heart; he does not know the time or place of conversion. He has found religion, but practically he has not got it. Many a man in the church has had this sweet feeling of conversion, and received the pearl of religious experience; but if religion is a gold mine, with rich veins of glorious graces, and sparkling principle, and precious joys and comforts, he has not found it out. He has never found the gold mine of religion. And many a man has discovered that religion is capable of growth and increase of strength and power, but his own experience does not prove it to him.

It is desirable, not only to find religion, but to secure a living hold upon it, and an inalienable title to it, so that we can positively say it belongs to us. In order to do this, we must buy it at God's own price. The moment we pay down what God demands, he will

give us the title, written in characters which we can understand.

But what is the price upon it? This miner had to give all that he had for the gold field. The merchant had to give all that he had for the Pearl of Great Price. So the sinner must give up all he has for and to religion.

1. The first principle, then, is that the sinner, in order to get religion, *must deny himself.* He must not consider anything as of any value compared to religion. He must have no other hope or trust.

(1.) The sinner often tries to make *a different bargain* with God. He proposes to give up all his sins but one. But God says, "all."

Sinner, you have tried to get the Christian's hope, and failed, because you were not willing to give up every sin. Young lady, you have tried to secure the Christian's hope, or to have the enjoyments of religion, but you have said, "I must be allowed to dance." Yet most of the Christian world understand God as declaring that you must give up that too. That is the reason why you have not become a happy Christian. Give up all, and your "peace will flow like a river."

Yonder is a man who says, "I want to be a Christian, and to live in the enjoyment of religion, but I cannot forgive my enemy." Alas! alas! Right there is where you fail. Give up your pride and selfishness and God's Word for it, you will realize the hopes and joys of a believer.

(2.) Often a sinner is willing to give up all his sins, but there are *some duties which he is not ready to undertake.* But God says we must take His yoke upon us.

Perhaps the duty is that you pray in public; or preach the gospel; or teach in the Sabbath-school; or hold family worship; or give of your substance to the church; or some other of greater or less importance. You will not undertake it. That refusal denies your hopes and lessens your joys as a child of God; robs you of the fulness of religion; stands between you and the sunlight of the Master's face.

(3.) But the sinner often makes another fatal blunder. He consents to give up all his sins and *take up* all his *duties*, but he proposes to do it *in his own strength*. He thinks he can reform himself. He offers to God the rags of his own righteousness, and expects in return the joys of religion; but such is not the divine plan.

2. The next principle is to take up Christ's cross and follow Him; not only give up everything *for* Christ, but consecrate everything *to* Him.

Just as long as you hold back anything, you will fail to enjoy religion. The moment you consecrate all to Christ and His cause, you will experience the riches of grace and glory.

Many persons wait for a great change in their feelings before they will profess conversion; and they seem to expect that change without any special effort on their part. But they will never know any real change, except that which follows a complete surrender of themselves to God and His cause. Let them sell all they have; all their sins; all their selfishness; all their pride; all their love of ease; all their minds, hearts, bodies, and friends; all their property and character; let them sell everything which they

have or love, or which may hinder their godly walk, or which they take interest in, or in which they hope; let them sell everything, and they will have a hold upon religion, which they will feel to be a true and abiding one.

APPLICATION.

1. Sinner, conversion, the possession of the Christian hope, is a pearl, a Pearl of Great Price. Do you want it? Then do like this merchantman.

(1.) Seek for it by the diligent use of God's Word, and by prayer at the foot of the cross.

(2.) Sacrifice everything in order to get it. Consecrate everything to this end and purpose.

2. Christian, religion is a gold mine, capable of infinite development. What you get at conversion is but a taste of what will follow. Its rich veins of grace run out into every part of life. It extends even down to the grave, and far beyond, into the boundless evermore. Do you wish to possess this gold mine in all its vastness of wealth? The plan is before you.

(1.) Do not get away from Calvary. There is the richest deposit. Abide with God at the mercy seat of prayer. Live daily upon the word of truth.

(2.) Give up everything, rather than a single principle of religion. Consecrate all to God's love and service.

This done, you will find inexhaustible supplies of peace and joy, and hope and love, and every other divine grace and blessing.

PART III.

RELIGION IN THE LIFE.

EXAMPLE.

SERMON IX.

GETTING RID OF RESPONSIBILITY: "THE UNJUST STEWARD," AND "THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN."

SERMON X.

DISCIPLESHIP AND DUTIES: "THE BOTTLES," AND "THE PATCHES."

SERMON XI.

PRAYER: "THE IMPORTUNATE FRIEND," AND "THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW."

SERMON XII.

FORGIVENESS: "THE WICKED SERVANT," AND "THE TWO DEBTORS."

SERMON IX.

GETTING RID OF RESPONSIBILITY.

"The Unjust Steward." (Luke xvi. 1–12.)
"The Wicked Husbandmen." (Matt. xxi. 33–43; Mark xii. 1–12; Luke xx. 9–18

1. THE general idea throughout this parable of the Husbandmen, as recorded by the three evangelists, is this: These men were renters on a man's farm, and not only refused to pay the rent, but mistreated the man's household, and tried to get the farm wholly into their possession.

The general idea of the parable of the Unjust Steward is this: The Steward not only wasted his master's goods, but defrauded him of his just dues.

2. Let us compare these parables.

(1.) In these points they are similar: Both the Steward and the Husbandmen were in charge of another man's goods; both were expected to render an account of their management; both abused the confidence reposed in them, and tried to rob the master.

(2.) But here are complemental ideas:

One was to *take care of goods*, and report; the other was to *increase goods*, and pay rent.

One erred in wasting and defrauding; the other, in refusing to submit to the demands of the master.

One showed his rebellious spirit by openly resisting; the other, by trying to make friends to himself and enemies to his master.

3. The Husbandmen represent men in their relation to God as his renters, using his property, and required by him to pay for the use of it. It teaches how rebellious men are toward God in refusing to recognize his authority over them, and their responsibility to him.

The Steward represents men in their relation to God as his business managers, required to attend to the interests of God, and render a fair account thereof. It teaches how treacherous and false they are to God in trying to rob him of his just dues, and escape their responsibility to him.

4. The general subject, then, is this:

GETTING RID OF RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD.

I. Notice MEN'S RESPONSIBILITY to God.

They are responsible in two ways: they have placed in their hands that which they are to use for his glory, first, by taking care of it; and, second, by making it profitable in building up his kingdom. Men are required to be not wasteful of God's gifts, and to labor for the interest of his cause.

1. Men are *stewards* under God. They have certain interests of God's put under their care. It is expected that they be kept and preserved as in trust for God.

(1.) Here are the affairs of God's visible kingdom, the church and its ordinances. They were originally put in the hands of Israel, God's chosen people. Since the coming of Christ, they are under the care of others,—men called for that purpose.

The written word, the Bible, men are to preserve. They are expected to keep it from destruction, anp from corruption. The preached gospel is to be kedt

up. God requires men to see to it, that it does not cease to exist, that it is made efficient, and that it be preserved from impurities. They are required to maintain prayer, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper.

(2.) Here are the interests of God as invested in our fellowmen.

We are to preserve and hold as sacred, the honor which belongs to every one in his several relation, as superior, inferior, and equal. We are to protect the life of our neighbor, to preserve his chastity, to respect and hold inviolate his property. We are forbidden to do anything injurious to his character, or to even think of defrauding him in any way.

His soul is, to a greater or less extent, in our care. Particularly is this true of those with whom, by reason of social or domestic relation, we are specially intimate.

(3.) God has interest in us ourselves. We are to take marked care of our bodies, minds, and souls; and sedulously guard and regulate, so far as we can, all those circumstances which are calculated to make us happy, or by which we may render others happy.

Thus are we God's stewards.

2. But we are also God's *renters*. We have been placed in temporary possession of his property, in order that we may use it for him and his cause.

(1.) In the very act of taking care of such of God's interests as are put into our hands, we live to his glory. Suppose we are zealous to maintain the word and sacraments; we honor him: honor him by worship, by service, and by the perpetuation of these divine in-

strumentalities. We thus help to make him known, and to build up his kingdom among men, and to accomplish the great design of redemption's plan, the salvation of sinners.

In caring for our own and our neighbors' honor, life, chastity, property, character, and soul, what are we doing, but bringing glory to God by our obedience, and by the preservation of those interests for which, and by which he works? We thus make ourselves to become co-workers with God in his vineyard.

(2.) But there is more demanded of us than this. The husbandmen were required not only to take care of the vineyard, so that it would ever be a source of revenue to their lord, but to pay a stipulated rent periodically, as a compensation for the advantages they realized from its temporary possession, and as an income to the owner.

So we are not only to be careful with these divine interests committed to our trust, so that God will not lose by our holding the agency; but we are expected to render them positively profitable to his cause and kingdom.

We must so use his ordinances as that they will promote his glory in the conversion and sanctification of our own souls and those of others. We are to utilize our domestic and social relations to the accomplishment of the same end. We are to use our bodies and minds, and character and influence and property, so as to make them serviceable in carrying on the work of redemption. Yea, a positive demand is made on us for a given portion of our time and thought, and love and labor, and substance and all else.

All these things make up the sum of our responsibility to God. We are not independent. But we are stewards and renters under the Divine Master.

II. Notice now how men try to get rid of their responsibility. It is finely represented by the conduct of these husbandmen, when trying to get clear of paying rent; by the conduct of this servant, when trying to avoid the disastrous consequences of being turned out of his office. Men try to get rid of their responsibility to God in one of two ways: first, either by always opposing God's claims upon them; or, second, while admitting these claims, by endeavoring to satisfy them in some other manner than that which God has prescribed.

1. These husbandmen tried to get rid of paying the rent *by sending off their master's servants, or by killing them.* So men try to avoid their religious duties by sending off or killing God's servants.

(1.) These servants are ministers, our Christian friends, or other agencies. They urge upon us the performance of duties. Ministers, for this purpose, preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. For this purpose parents teach their children. For this purpose Sabbath-school teachers and church officers labor in the church. For this purpose our relatives set us a good example and give us a goodly precept. For this the religious press is wrought. For this all events of Providence conspire.

(2.) Men, by resisting these appeals and exhortations, try to drive off or destroy these influences. The result is, that it is often as they desire.

Those who labor for their good desist after repeated repulses, and depart, grieving sadly over the wicked and ungrateful conduct of men. The Master may send back others, but they receive the same treatment. Many a preacher of the gospel has been led to give up his work among those who persistently withstood him. So did Jesus on several occasions. So did the apostles; and it has been so ever since. Many a mother has despaired of ever seeing her son come to Christ. Many loved ones have their lives overshadowed by the firm conviction, that the dearest objects of their earthly affection have passed beyond all hope. Nor is this all. The resistance which the ungodly offer to the gospel is often of such a character as to kill, destroy, the moral and religious influence of God's servants. This is done by evil whispering or slanderous intimations, that cause the world to be suspicious and distrustful. It is done by defrauding the righteous out of this world's estate, which cripples them from being able to practice beneficence. And there are cases where the natural life is taken, in opposition to Christ and his people.

(3.) But what are the stones and implements with which this work of resistance is carried on? These are many, and we could not be expected to mention all, for they include every device and ingenuity of the Devil, and the flesh, and the world against what is good. But we call attention to a few.

Indifference is one stone. How many a servant of God has been discouraged and his efforts paralyzed by this!

Carelessness is another. Men respond to exhortations and invitations in a reckless and thoughtless way,

that does more harm than if they had paid no attention to them.

Worldliness is another. Men let the cares of this life, and its pleasures and aspirations, choke the seed of truth.

Then there are scepticism, and infidelity, and unbelief, and luke-warmness, and inconsistency. Indeed, the names of these stones are legion.

2. The steward tried to get rid of the claims upon him *by compounding with his master's debtors*—that is, not by satisfying his master in the way he was expected, but by trying to avoid the disastrous consequences of his unfaithfulness. He was ashamed to beg, and he was either too proud, or not strong enough to dig for a living and to liquidate his debts.

So men have laid themselves liable to God's wrath, by wasting the gifts which God bestowed upon them. They are under his ban and curse. But they are too proud to beg for mercy, and they are too weak to dig—work out their own deliverance. Yet they realize the consequences of their conduct, and with the steward exclaim: "What shall I do?" Like this steward, they know there are no resources at their command. All that men owe, they owe not to men, but to God. And while they can, they abuse the power in hand, to substitute something else instead of the forfeited favor of Heaven, and they do this by still further defrauding God of his just dues.

This is done in various ways.

(1.) They try to get the riches of this world. In doing this, they are careful not to set themselves directly against religion. Indeed, realizing it to be a help to

the accomplishment of their end, they may profess, or at least befriend it. They may try to do good with their money. Instead of confessing their sins and pleading for mercy in Jesus' name, and trusting in him alone for happiness, and thus coming to a settlement with God in his own way, they try to avoid the settlement. They prostitute their faculties, and waste their opportunities, in the vain effort to secure happiness from money, or from what money may obtain. They do not seek wealth to consecrate it to God; but they seek it to flatter their own lusts, and pamper their appetites, and gratify their passions, only giving to God what will appease an uneasy conscience, or get for them the praise of men.

(2.) Others do not seek for happiness in the accumulation of riches, but in the wild whirls of pleasure. Knowing, too, that there can be no true enjoyment when utterly ignoring religion, they keep up the semblance of piety, avoid violent excesses, and forswear all forms of immorality. Yet they go just as far as propriety and good sense and public opinion will allow in the indulgence of their carnal desires and sensual appetites.

Thus they seek for happiness instead of looking for it from the grace of God, which is in Christ Jesus. They give God only enough of their service to keep up appearances, and to prevent the full forfeiture of his favor, and to escape the untempered curse of heaven.

(3.) Again, there are others who are content to live in poverty, who are willing to exercise the utmost self-denial, and undergo the greatest hardships, but they aim at nothing more than the high esteem and honor of

their fellowmen. They do not seek influence to use it for God, but they seek it for their own exaltation. In order to secure it, they may work for God; and in order to keep it, use it for God, but abstractly, they seek it for themselves.

All such conduct is shaving God's accounts for our own profit. It is shirking God's plan of adjustment for a substitute. It is trying to get rid of our responsibility to God, by endeavoring to forestall the consequences of unfaithfulness and disobedience. It is the act of compounding in God's name with his debtors. All gold and silver are God's, but under pretense of acting in God's stead, and as God's stewards, we cut off a part for ourselves. All our joys and pleasures are to be for God's glory, but we take off a part for ourselves. All influence is given us to use for God, but we separate a large per cent for ourselves.

APPLICATION.

1. Those who oppose religion will be destroyed like these husbandmen. God will send out his armies against them. They will destroy the feelings. They will destroy the conscience. They will destroy the body, mind, and soul.

2. The man who shaves God's accounts, and hopes to compound with his debtors, may get the praise of men, as did this steward, but he cannot in this way clear himself from the charge of having wasted God's gifts. He cannot hope to make a satisfactory settlement with God by so doing.

3. The only way *to meet our responsibility to God*, is to *plead our unworthiness and beg for mercy*, and

by our worship and service acknowledge God's claims upon us, doing this earnestly and diligently.

No man should be ashamed to beg God for mercy and pardon. No man is so weak and feeble, but he may dig deep and lay his foundation upon the rock. No man should refuse to give to God's servants those pledges of obedience and love which God demands. No man should refuse to reverence the Son of God, who comes to us in the gospel. Doing this, we will not be turned out of the vineyard. Doing this, God will not take away our stewardship. But he will still make us the custodians of his valuables on earth, and he will still put into our hands the power to do much towards the building up of his kingdom.

SERMON X.

DISCIPLESHIP AND DUTIES.

"The Patches." (Luke v. 36.)
"The Bottles." (Luke v. 37, 38.)

1. THE Jews had asked Jesus why his disciples did not fast. He replied by asking them if the servants of the bridegroom could mourn while the bridegroom was with them.

(1.) Then, to further answer the question, he gave them these two parables, by which he designed to illustrate the relation between discipleship and its duties.

(2.) He wished to teach them that the new dispensation could not be adapted to the old. Thus he anticipated, with the view of preventing, the troubles which should arise in the church from this source.

Paul and Peter had a bitter altercation on this subject, Paul reproving Peter for encouraging Christians in employing the old temple-rites in their worship of God. Paul also wrote the Epistle to the Galatians for the purpose of teaching the churches in that country, that the ceremonies of the Old Testament dispensation should not be used in worship under the New Testament dispensation.

This has been the point in controversy between the Protestants and Roman Catholics. The former hold that the worship of God ought to be in all simplicity,

and not mixed up with so many forms and ceremonies. For this reason, we oppose the observance of so many holy days and church festivals. For the same reason, opposition is made to the teaching, that a certain form of worship is necessary. Anything is worship that is in the Spirit, and sincere.

(2.) But there was a secondary and more practical object in view with Jesus: to show that we must not expect from young disciples the same work as from those of more experience; but that we must adapt our requirements to the state of discipleship.

Hence, we are instructed that an elder must not be "a novice," or a man who has not been fully and properly indoctrinated, and who has not the necessary experience. Hence, also, we are told that some disciples cannot endure strong meat, and that we who are strong ought to bear with those who are weak.

2. The subject, therefore, presented by the text is this: THE RELATION BETWEEN DISCIPLESHIP AND ITS DUTIES.

I. DISCIPLESHIP IS PREPARATORY TO DUTIES.

The bottles spoken of were made of goat skins, and designed to contain liquids. It was the only way of preserving wines in those days. So discipleship is the only way of getting ready to perform religious duties.

By discipleship we mean this: the acceptance of Christ by faith, and the profession of him before men. Without this, there can be no church work or religious worship, that will be received by God as proper.

1. *No* man's *worship* of God will be *accepted unless* he has offered it *in the name of Jesus Christ.*

(1.) Whenever a Jew came to worship God in the

olden times, it was necessary for him to bring his sacrifices, and be introduced by the presentation of blood. This was why Abel's offering was accepted, and Cain's rejected. Abel's was in blood; Cain's was without the blood.

Whenever the Jew came to the temple, he had to bring his living sacrifice; and the blood was to be sprinkled by the priest. Even the high priest dared not go into the most holy place without the sprinkling of blood.

(2.) We are told that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" that "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we can be saved, but the name of Jesus;" and there are numberless passages teaching that, unless we come to God in the name of Christ, he will not receive us.

The first step to be taken, in rendering worship to God, is to accept Christ as our Saviour.

(3.) How would it appear to men, for a man to lead in public prayer who is not a church-member? What would we think of such a person coming to the Lord's table? What would be the universal verdict for such a man to go forth as a preachor of the gospel?

Now, if these leading acts of religious worship are by men regarded as improperly rendered by a man who is not a disciple, how must they appear to God? And will not God so regard every act of worship, however unimportant? So we understand that the receiving of Christ by faith is necessary to prepare us for rendering suitable worship to God.

2. If it be *so with worship*, it must be so with all Christian *work*; for work is worship.

(1.) Let us examine this principle in connection with the duties required of the Jews before the coming of Christ.

We have all read that "the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to God." By sacrifices we are to understand not only the mediums of worship, but the labors and acts of self-denial performed. These were abominations to God; that is, he not only rejected them, but was displeased and angered by them.

Korah and his companions were slain because they offered strange fire unto the Lord. The offering was not in the regular way of bloody sacrifices. Uzzah did a good thing when he put forth his hand to steady the tottering ark, but God slew him for it.

(2.) The precepts of the New Testament are equally plain upon this point. Paul, in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, says: "Without charity (that love for God, springing from a new heart), though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, etc., I am nothing—as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal,"—it is all mockery.

Again we are taught that it makes no sort of difference what we may do, if we have no faith in Christ, God is not pleased with our good deeds.

If we want to do good works, let us first get the bottle to put them in by accepting of Christ. Then, whatever we may do in his name, God will receive it with favor. But if we reject Jesus, our very best endeavors for the good of religion are an insult to high heavens.

Then, the foundation of true worship and true work for God is Christ Jesus. "He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending."

II. But with equal emphasis is stress laid upon the fact that DUTIES ARE NECESSARY TO DISCIPLESHIP.

The garment is worn out, causing it to be uncomely and ragged; it is, by reason of the rents, rendered useless for wear; and it is, for the same reason, incomplete. It requires the patches to restore it to its state of being a real garment.

So it is with discipleship, the mere profession of faith in Christ. Christian duties are as necessary to prove that there is any true discipleship, as patches are necessary to the worn or rent garment.

1. A gentleman buys a new pair of boots. They are of good leather and well put together, and a perfect fit. But soon after buying them a hole is cut in the uppers. The rent spoils the looks of the boots. A patch is neatly executed to restore the rent and make the garment presentable.

So it is with discipleship. When a man professes Christ, he has taken a proper step. But contact with the world, and Satan, and the flesh, will soon make a rent in that profession; and it takes religious work and worship to patch it up.

(1.) What would the world say of a man's profession of religion, if he never afterwards entered the house of God? Suppose he never comes to preaching, or prayer meeting, or any other kind of public worship, would we not say at once that his joining the church was not worth anything—was not worthy of our respect?

Suppose we know that he never prays in his family or in his closet; never reads the Bible; never thanks God for his goodness; would that man's profession of

religion be worthy of the name? Would we not say he is deceiving himself and us?

(2.) Suppose such a man never does anything expected of Christians; continues his old sinful habits; neglects the practice of life's kindly graces; refuses to support and sustain the cause of the church; we would say at once that his pretensions to piety are not respectable—are reproachful.

2. The boot, with the rent in it, is not only not respectable, not presentable, but it is comparatively *useless* to the owner. It will not keep out the moisture, or the cold, or the dust. The patch is necessary to restore it to utility.

So a profession of Christ, unattended by religious worship and good works, is not only pronounced disreputable, but it is useless to him who made it, and to all others.

(2.) What is such a man's membership in the church worth? He does more harm than good. The cause of religion suffers on his account. It loses its good name. He cumbers the ground. His name swells the roll, and others have to bear his burdens in addition to their own.

His relatives may take comfort to themselves because he is a church member; but what comfort can there be in such inconsistency? It only makes them feel secure for him, when there is no evidence whatever that his heart is right. It will cause them to tremble lest he thus harden his neck against reproof and the truth, and inherit the hypocrite's hope.

(3.) What benefit can any man expect to get to himself from such a course? He may flatter himself that

he will stand better among men, in these days when religion seems to be popular. But he is deceived. The world itself, and much more the church, will lose every confidence in a man, who can act in such a manner. It bears the face of trying to deceive society. It places him on the list of those who do things by halves.

And surely such a man cannot imagine that the mere profession of Christ, without the Christian's life, can bring any peace to his guilty soul. Conscience cannot be deceived. The terrors of the law will not be in the least abated. He is more criminal in the sight of God than if he had never made any pretensions. Such conduct exceedingly angers the mind of our Lord.

Thus discipleship is utterly useless without the accompanying duties of work and worship. The garment is rent and moth-eaten.

3. But *what is discipleship* when we come to consider it in its real nature? Is accepting of Christ by faith, and professing him before men discipleship,—all of discipleship? No more than a garment all cut up and moth-eaten, and worn out into holes, is a complete garment. As it takes patches to render such a garment perfect, so it takes religious duties to make the profession of Christ true discipleship.

(1.) It is the foundation of the spiritual house, but the duties are necessary to the superstructure.

(2.) It is the flower-bud of Christian character, but it takes work and worship to open it out into the full-blown rose.

(3.) It is the plant-seed of vital godliness, but there must be "the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear," of Christian duties.

APPLICATION.

Christ does not propose to present on earth, either in the church, or in the individual Christian, a perfect character. But it will always be, in this world, a garment that needs patching. It will always show the patches of repentance, and worship, and divers good works. It may often go for a long time unpatched, rent, moth-eaten, worn into holes; but then we cannot help seeing the patches, somewhere and at sometime.

And by and by Christ will take off the patches, and present us and his church in Heaven, "without spot," or flaw,—perfected in holiness; and we will "wash our robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb."

SERMON XI.

PRAYER.

"The Importunate Friend." (Luk xi. 5–8.)
"The Importunate Widow." (Luke xviii. 1–5.)

1. IN the second parâble, the widow came to the judge, asking him to avenge her of an adversary. He did not care anything about his obligations to God or to man. He cared nothing for justice, or for the interests of his fellow-men. Yet he did as he was requested, because the woman continued to press her case, and because he would get rid of the trouble of listening to her.

2. This parable has its counterpart in that of the Importunate Friend. A man came to his neighbor at midnight, asking for three loaves of bread with which to feed a hungry guest. The man applied to had gone to bed, he and all his family, and urged that he could not grant the request. But the applicant continued his plea; and, although the neighbor cared nothing for the claims of friendship, yet he got up, and gave what was needed, simply because the application was so urgently made.

3. Here are three groups of thought:

I. Men ought to pray. II. They ought to pray always. III. They ought not to faint in prayer.

I. Men ought to pray:

1. *Because they are needy and dependent.* This man

who asked for the three loaves was in this condition. So was the widow. So are we. Men may think of themselves otherwise, but none of us has anything, except as God gives it to us. We are dependent upon him for life, for health, and for the condition of mind necessary to enable us to get the good things of earth. Yea, all our circumstances are made for us by God in his great goodness. "In him we live, move, and have our being." To believe otherwise is to deny divine providence. We may have something, but we are dependent upon God for its continuance. And what we have not, we are to get from him in answer to prayer. The ordinary things of life we are to look to God for. The things of grace are to be obtained in the same manner.

2. We ought to *pray*,—not demand or expect blessings from God. This man had not any right to make demands of his friend. This widow had no right to demand justice, or sit down idly and wait for the judge to act. They both prayed. It was what was expected.

So men are expected to ask God for what they want. All things are given in answer to prayer.

God is a Judge, the great Ruler over all things. But he never has given us any reason to believe that we have any claims of justice against him. All such claims have been forfeited by our sins. We have no right to demand a single blessing or favor from him. We cannot expect his interference in our behalf, if we idly sit down and wait.

God is our friend; but we have no claims upon him as such. If he is a friend it is beeause he is gracious and merciful. He may give us good, but if he does it

is all of grace. Yet if we ask, we are encouraged to expect an answer, because he is a friend. Men ought to pray, then, because it is the only way to secure God's interference in our behalf.

3. Men ought to pray, because *God will give what we ask*, and much more. The judge gave this widow what she requested. The man gave his friend all he asked. So God encourages us to pray to him. He makes abundant promises to those who seek. And he has always performed his word.

Our condition, our relation to God, and God's purpose and plan, all join to teach us the duty of prayer.

II. "MEN OUGHT TO PRAY ALWAYS." There si no time or circumstance when we are debarred from coming to God, or when it does not become us to approach him in supplication.

1. We are to *ask God for whatever we wish.* True, we are to make our wills God's will. But if we will bear in mind that he is our judge, the only one that can give us justice, if we will remember that God is our friend, and will never do ought, save what is best for us; then we will feel like coming to him with all our interests.

If we need food, if we need help in any matter, if we need comfort in a trouble, to whom can we more safely go than to God? Hence, says one, "In everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

It may be a great favor which we ask, but that is no bar. It may be a very small thing for which we pray, but that is no bar. We may be very unworthy of

God's blessings, but that is no bar. We may be very selfish in what we seek, but that is no bar. We may be very insignificant in our own eyes and in the opinion of others, but that is no bar. We are to "pray always."

2. *We can never be out of season.* This friend came at midnight, yet he was answered. We may think we are out of season, but there is no out of season for prayer to God. "His ears are ever open to our cries." It may be the midnight of life with us; we may have passed the accepted time of youth, but that is no bar. We may have gone far into sin's midnight ways, but that is no bar. We may have sinned against much light and mercy, but that is no bar. We may be in the midnight of busy cares; we may be on the highway, but it is not out of season. We may be in the thronged market of trade, but that is not out of season. We may have been too self-possessed to look to God in the daylight of prosperity, and the dark hours of adversity may be upon us, and we may feel ashamed to call on God, but it is not out of season. We may have been too happy and proud to call on God in the bright sunlight of success and enjoyment, and now it may be that we are in the midst of the storms of ills and sorrows, and we may feel that it is unbecoming in us to pray, but it is not out of season. We may be in the midnight of temptation; we may be on the threshold of a besetting sin, and we may think we have gone too far to pray, but it is not out of season. We may hold the cup of carnal pleasure to our very lips and think it too late to pray, but it is not out of season.

It is never too late to pray. We cannot go too far astray to pray. We cannot get sunk too deep in the mire of sin to pray. We *may* pray always; we *should* pray always.

3. We are to *pray* always. There is no time to fret—pray; no time to despond—pray; no occasion to be rash—pray; no occasion to give up—pray; no occasion for turning back—pray; no use in taking revenge—pray; no use of impatience—pray; under all circumstances—pray.

That is to put your case in God's hand, to submit yourself to his will. Before hand, or in hand, or after hand—pray. It does not stop work, but gives it an impulse. It does not belie faith, but is its evidence. It does not dim hope, but gives it a brighter glow. It does not require peace, but suits in war. It does not require holiness, but brings it to us. It does not require innocence, but consists with guilt. It does not forbid enjoyment, but sweetens it. It does not mar pleasure, but enhances it. It does not hinder business, but gives it success. It does not waste time, but saves it. It suits the closet. It suits the social circle. It suits the place of daily avocation.

III. But *men ought to pray, and not faint.* Jesus implies that we will have much cause to faint and grow weary. But we must not. And we will not, if we understand, like this widow, that prayer is our only recourse; we cannot avenge ourselves. We will not faint, if, like this friend, we realize that prayer is our only hope; we cannot help ourselves. It is midnight with us. The cause can only be plead by God our Judge.

1. *Rebuffs* ought not to make us faint in prayer. This friend was rebuffed. He was told: "Trouble me not." The widow was rebuffed. She was told: "I fear not God, nor regard man." But neither of them stopped asking. So neither should we cease from prayer because we are rebuffed. Men will say: "what kind of a God do you suppose the Lord is, to hear the prayer of such a sinner as you are?" Satan will say: "God will not notice such an insignificant thing as you are" Unbelief in the heart will say: "It is too late, or it is too small a matter to pray to God for." There will be a thousand, yea, ten thousand such repulses to keep you from prayer. But the word of God should prevail. It says: Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Conscience will try to put you to shame. The world will try to make sport of you. Your own heart will try to discourage you. Your very family may make light of your prayers. And the devil will oppose you with all his might,

> "For Satan trembles when he sees
> The weakest saint upon his knees."

But recall what Paul wrote to the Ephesians. "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your lions girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

praying always, with all prayer and supplication, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

2. *Delays* ought not to make us faint in prayer. God may put off answering us,—may put off for a long time. But he will hear his elect when they cry unto him; yea, he *will* hear at length, though he bear long. Our time may not be his time, and his time is always best. Our way may not be his way, and his way is best. We may ask for what we think is an egg, but because he knows it to be a serpent, he may deny the serpent to us, and give us the egg. We may ask for what appears to us bread, but God knows it is a stone; and he will deny the stone, but grant the bread. All this may seem to us like no answer. But it is the true answer.

Because, therefore, we are short-sighted, we should not be discouraged at apparent delays on God's part to answer prayer.

3. Men ought not to faint in prayer, because *God's design* is to perfect our graces and try our faith, by causing us to wait. How long he made Israel wait! Over four hundred years. How many earnest prayers, think you, were made during that time for deliverance? How long he made the church wait for the Messiah! Nearly four thousand years! And yet how many mothers and fathers lived and died praying to see the day, and saw it only by faith; and died, not having received the promise! Yet the answer came at last. So may it be with us! So *will* it be with us. Let us know, that it is God's plan to make us ready, thoroughly ready, before he gives an answer to our prayers. And it is the praying—the persevering prayer—that fits us for prayer's answer. The main benefit of prayer is its re-

flex influence. It is a schooling. It is discipline. It is a method of preparation. No one, therefore, who seeks the highest good of the soul and the glory of God should be discouraged from prayer simply because the answer is delayed.

APPLICATION.

1. The great trouble with most *Christians* is that they *do not pray enough.*

Suppose our business does not move along as we could wish. It is in a tangle. It threatens financial embarrassment. Our living is in peril. We are apt to fret. We are inclined to become discouraged, and to resort to improper methods for a remedy. All this is wrong. We should take it to God. His will may be to give prosperity, or it may be to strengthen and comfort us while he allows us to be still further troubled. But, however that may be, we cannot fail to be benefited by leaving it all in his hands.

Suppose we are overtaken by sickness and bereavement. God will, in answer to prayer, cause them to work out our good in this world and in that to come.

Suppose a difficulty arise between us and a neighbor. It is not prudent to become angry, or to cherish revenge, or even to allow estrangement between us and him. The wise plan is to take the trouble to God, and submit our cases to him. This cannot fail to secure peace.

Suppose there is a loved one out of Christ. Let us carry him to God in prayer. He will give his soul to us.

Suppose we ourselves are not Christians. We should

go to God in earnest and persevering prayer. He will give us the Holy Spirit and heaven.

Prayer brightens our lives, clears up our cloudy days, makes our burdens light and bearable, gives us comfort in sorrow.

2. *As a church, we should hold meetings for prayer.* Sunday schools are well enough, where we can teach and study God's word; preaching is indispensable, in order that we may have the gospel of the Son of God; but meetings for prayer are of prime importance. Such gatherings will unite us the better in Christian love and sympathy. They will make us love the church more. They will strengthen us for life's trials.

And we should pray in our families. It will help us in domestic cares. It will help us to do our duty as parents and children. It will ensure the salvation of our households. It will secure the favor and blessing of heaven upon our homes.

Nor can we afford to neglect closet prayer. We may not find it easy and convenient to seek seclusion from day to day; but it will pay us.

There are men who will not take time to sharpen the tools with which they work. But it is not the way of wisdom. So is it with reference to prayer. It is in this way that we are to prepare ourselves for life's work.

Hence the fitness of the truth: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

SERMON XII.

FORGIVENESS.

"The Wicked Servant." (Matt. xviii. 23–35.)
"The Two Debtors." (Luke vii. 41, 42.)

1. THESE two parables are alike, in that they were both spoken to illustrate the doctrine of forgiveness, and both use the same illustration of a debtor.

2. Yet they are complements of each other. It takes them both, to present the doctrine in its fullness. In the one forgiveness is represented as unconditional, while in the other, it is conditional. In the one, all men are represented as needing and receiving the same degree of forgiveness, while in the other, there are degrees of forgiveness. In the one case forgiveness is final, while in the other it is partial.

3. Let us notice the following points:

I. The necessity that calls for forgiveness.

II. The conditions of forgiveness.

III. The character of forgiveness.

I. There is A NECESSITY FOR FORGIVENESS; a necessity that calls for our compassion toward our fellowmen, and for God's pity toward us. What is that necessity?

1. It arises from the fact that *we are in debt.* Every man is in debt to God, and all men are respectively in debt to each other. This servant was in debt to his

master, and that was what led to the master's pity. The fellow-servant was in debt to the first servant, and this should have elicited the compassion of the latter. Both the men referred to in the seventh chapter of Luke were in debt to the creditor, and that was what called for their forgiveness.

(1.) We are all *in debt to God;* we owe certain obligations to him, such as reverence, worship, obedience and trust.

Not only so, but all have failed to discharge these duties, and are behindhand with God. The truth is, we come into being as debtors to God. "For by the disobedience of one were many made sinners," and "the very imaginations of the thoughts of the heart are evil continually, and that *from his* youth."

(2.) Being in debt to God makes us to be *in debt to our fellow-beings,* the creatures of his hand and the subjects of his government.

For he requires us to regard the interests of our fellow-creatures,—their life, virtue, property and character. We all become dependents, each on the other; the rich upon the poor, and *vice versa;* the wise to the ignorant, and the ignorant to the wise. To ignore our mutual obligation is to cast off God's authority, and undermine the very foundations of man's welfare and even existence.

(3.) But we are *not all equally in debt* to God. One requires a greater measure of FORGIVENESS than another. One servant owed ten thousand talents, and another only one hundred pence. One debtor was behind five hundred pence and the other only fifty. So some men owe more than others to God. For God

has done more for them. Some men owe more to God in the duty of worshipping him with their substance, because God has made them rich. Some men owe God more in the work of saving souls, because God has made them influential, and given them a special commission.

We owe more to some men than to others; more to our fellow-immortals than to the dumb brutes; more to fellow-citizens than to foreigners; more to neighbors than to strangers; more to friends than to acquaintances; more to relatives than to friends; more to loved ones near than to kindred more remote. But we are all debtors, and need forgiveness, unless we can pay up.

2. Like the characters in these parables, however, *we have nothing to pay.*

(1.) It is not within our power to do our duty, either to God or to our fellows. We come into the world under the ban of guilt. Men are sinners from birth, and are wholly inclined to evil only. It is not natural for any person to want to do right. We come to the performance of every duty, therefore, at a disadvantage; disinclined, with insufficient strength, and with heart and mind all the while ready to taint the endeavor with sinful thoughts and feelings. For a man morally in debt to enter upon the performance of a duty is like a man with hands and garments all defiled with smut taking hold of purely-white linen to move it. There is not a duty we try but is polluted in God's sight by our uncleanness. This was represented, under the Jewish ceremonial, by the regulations for the unclean. For instance, if a man had touched a dead body, he could not join in the temple service. As far

as appearance is concerned, and as far as men can see, the duty might be perfectly performed. But in God's sight it is, like "the sacrifice of the wicked,"—"an abomination."

(2.) There is another idea: When a sin has been committed, or a duty omitted, we cannot make amends to God for it. The reason is obvious. Each moment of our life has present duties, the performance of which demands all our mind, soul, heart and strength. The thief may restore the article stolen, and even ten times its value, but he has not changed the character of his act in stealing. The act is just as unchangeable as if he had taken a fellow-man's life. Hence it is written: "Can any man make a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."

Thus it is seen that the natural man cannot pay his debts, either to God or to his fellow-man.

If, then, we are in debt and unable to pay, we stand in need of forgiveness. There is no other way for our difficulties to be adjusted. Our needy and helpless condition calls for God's pity.

II. But let us notice the condition of forgiveness. In the parable of the Two Debtors, we get the idea that God pardons unconditionally, But not so, from the parable of the WICKED SERVANT. That servant was pardoned on three implied conditions: 1st, he asked for it; 2nd, he promised payment; 3rd, he was to take the proper course in making the payment.

1. So God forgives us, first, on the condition that *we ask him to do so.*

(1.) This implies a confession of sin, and the promise

is: "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." It implies sorrow for sin, and forgiveness is pledged to repentance.

(2.) Asking for forgiveness implies confidence or faith in God; and pardon is offered to the man who believes. No man who knows God's plan of redemption, will presume to come to God asking pardon, except he come believing "that God is, and is a rewarder of them that seek him."

2. God forgives on condition that *we pay our debts.* This implies that we have correct views of the righteousness of the law, and the justice of the penalty: that we do not expect to rob justice of her dues; that we are not looking alone at the hope of escaping punishment; that it is in our hearts to be loyal and faithful subjects of a good government.

3. God forgives also on the implied condition that *we take the proper course* in our efforts to pay the debts we owe. If we expect to accomplish this by our own efforts, there will be no forgiveness. If we expeet to gather up all available merit, in a moral life, or in good resolutions, or in a consecrated manhood or womanhood; we may be ever so exacting upon ourselves, but it will be of no avail. We are not to pay our debts in any other way, than by working for the King. If we go out from his sight or dominion, we will fail. The only plan is to stay with him; that is, through faith in Jesus, to give ourselves and all we are to God.

This servant was not absolutely forgiven, when he was loosed; but he would have been, had he paid the debt, or if he had remained with and labored for his master, instead of trying to collect the paltry amounts due to himself.

III. Let us notice in the last place, the character of this forgiveness. God's forgiveness is represented in the text as "pity;" our forgiveness of our fellow-men, as "compassion." And God's forgiveness is represented in the parable as the holding up on a debt; and in the parable in Luke, as the exercise of grace, or showing favor for the sake of another; from which we get these ideas:

1. God's *forgiveness is manifested in two ways*, or in two degrees. For the Greek word translated "forgave" in Luke, is not the same as that so translated in Matthew. In Luke, it means the exercise of grace or favor, or being appeased for the sake of another; carrying with it the idea of true evangelical forgiveness, which is thorough and final. But in Matthew, it means only to bear with for a while, as when a creditor holds up on a debtor, and does not close out the claim. There is no intimation of a thorough remittance of the obligation.

(1.) So God forgives in the sense of having *patience with us*, or pitying us, or holding up on our debts. Thus he does with all men, and yet there is a thorough forgiveness, or grace, promised on the condition that we satisfy the law by faith in Christ.

(2.) This latter forgiveness, when once granted, is final. God may bear with a sinner, and at length deliver him to the tormentor, because he does not comply with the prescribed conditions. But when we comply with these conditions God grants a thorough and final FORGIVENESS, which HE never cancels, and which is a guaranty of eternal salvation.

2. The FORGIVENESS by us of our fellow-man is to be of the nature of compassion.

(1.) If they fall short in any of their conduct towards us, we are to be patient with them, just as God is patient with us. We are to wait kindly and compassionately before we judge them, or become estranged from them. And this we are to do, as God does, whether they ask us or not. We are to consider their trials and burdens, and sympathize with them. We are to take the most favorable view of their conduct; make every allowance for them; indulge in no enmity or spite, or revenge, but do towards them as God does towards us.

(2.) Then if they confess their faults, and ask forgiveness, we are, like God, to extend a thorough and final forgivenesss; not only forgive, but forget. For when God finally forgives, all our sins are blotted out, and so far as his records are concerned, forgotten or wholly cancelled. And this we are to do infinitely, which is what Jesus means when he says "seventy times seven."

APPLICATION.

1. God forgives, bears with ten thousand faults in us—yes, more than ten thousand. And shall not we bear with just a few faults in our fellow-men? God has pity on us for our weakness and helplessness; and shall not we have compassion on fellow-men in their infirmities?

We commit gross sins against God, and he only says, "Poor sinful man! We must bear with him." The Saviour says, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And so we get "the early and

latter rain." We get the life-giving sunlight. We get the comforts of home." And what shall we say more? For God's blessings upon us undeserving sinners are numberless.

Yet, if a dumb brute offend us, we jerk, and whip, and abuse. "Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant?"

You insult God with your oaths, or your impurity, or some other wickedness. And God only says: "Let him alone. Let me continue my mercies. Let me shower upon him favors. And if he bear fruit, well." So he does. And O, how rich is his grace, and mercy, and loving kindness! But let a neighbor insult us, and what do we do? Abuse him for all we can think about, swear vengeance, harbor malice, and what else?

2. If we are thus uncharitable, and impatient, and intolerant, and exacting in our dealings with our fellow-man, it may justly make us fear lest God has not thoroughly forgiven us, but only held up his wrath, and shown us pity. For if we are forgiven, we will love; love not only God, but our fellow-men, for whom Christ died. And if we are not thus patient, and compassionate, and charitable, God will deliver us, at length, over to the tormentors—eternal fire, and death, and woe.

3. God forgives the very greatest sinners as freely as he does the smallest, if we come to him in the right way. He will forgive five hundred sins as readily as fifty. He will forgive ten thousand talents of sin as frankly as one hundred pence, if we approach him in the proper way. But he expressly declares that he will not forgive thoroughly any one that loves not, forgives not, has not compassion on his brother. He it is that says,

through one of his apostles: "Be ye tender-hearted, compassionate, forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as God, for Christ's sake, forgives you." He it is that says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good." "Recompense to no man evil for evil." "Avenge not yourselves." "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." "Render not railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you." "Be patient toward all men." "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

PART FOURTH.

RELIGION IN THE WORLD.

THE CHURCH.

SERMON XIII.

"The Tares," and "The Net."

SERMON XIII.

THE CHURCH.

"The Tares." (Matt. xiii. 24–30; 37–43.)
"The Net." (Matt. xiii. 47–50.)

THESE two parables unite in presenting for our consideration this subject:

The Church of Christ on Earth.

There are two senses of the word church, viz.: the invisible and the visible church. The invisible church is the true work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and minds of men. The visible church is intended to be the outward demonstration and regulation of this work.

These two parables teach us: I. The object of the church; II. The character of the church.

I. In noticing the object of the church, our attention is called, first, to

1. The object of *the invisible church* represented by the man sowing the good seed. The man is Christ, and the seed are the members of the church. The members of the invisible church are real Christians.

(1.) They are called here "the children of the kingdom." This means that they are such as have been born again, adopted into God's family, and declared to be the citizens of Mount Zion.

(2.) They are called "the righteous." This means, that their sins have been pardoned, and they have been justified before God. Every one who is truly converted is a member of the invisible church.

(3.) They are in the world,—among men. No church lines can be drawn to take in every such one. There are many, no doubt, outside the visible church. The object, therefore, of the invisible church, as set forth in this parable of the Tares, is the regeneration and conversion of sinners unto God.

2. But the parable of the Net represents the object of the visible church, the fish representing the members of it.

(1.) The visible church was not established directly by Christ, but indirectly by his disciples, as the Net was managed by several persons.

(2.) The object of the visible church was to gather together the good,—every one belonging to the invisible kingdom—as the Net was cast out to get good fish. It has no hope of getting all the good into it, any more than the Net could be expected to catch all the good fish. There is no wish that it should be burdened with those who are not true Christians, as the Net would rather not entangle the worthless fish.

II. What is THE CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH? What kind of society constitutes it? What is the nature of its government?

1. Let us notice from the two parables the character of the society constituting the church. In considering this, we must bear in mind, that in the parable of the Tares "the field is the world," that is, the ecclesiastical lines of the invisible church are the limits of the human race, while in the parable of the Net the ecclesiastical lines of the visible church are certain prescribed boundaries. And the society in each instance is the asso-

ciation within the indicated lines. This being the case, the society of the church is mixed, that is, made up of good and bad.

This characteristic of church society is set forth in two ways: First, by the objects used for representation, and, second, by the explanation given for the cause of it.

(1.) *The objects* used *to represent the good and bad* in the church are significant. The wheat in the one parable and the good fish in the other represent true and good Christians, while the tares, in one instance, and the bad fish in the other represent the wicked. The former are useful and sought after, and the latter are useless and avoided.

(2.) In explaining the reason for the admixture of the good and evil in the church, we find a further delineation of ecclesiastical society. These ideas are derived from the parable of the Tares alone.

The reasons why there are good and bad in the church are two: First, men sleep, and, second, the devil is awake and busy. If men did not sleep, or if Satan did not exist and continue active, there would never be any impurities in the church. "The children of the kingdom" would all be "the righteous." There would be no use for any law. The lines of the invisible church would coincide with those of the visible church. The Net would not gather of every kind.

But this is not the case. Satan is exceeding watchful, "going about" suggesting wicked thoughts and evil desires that develop into sinful words and vile actions. He purposely mingles evil in the same heart with good and innocent impulses. He does this

in a secret way, and no harm is suspected. For "he goes his way," and does not show his cloven foot or his scaly form. The tracks are not searched for under the circumstances. And even after there have been developments in the way of words and acts, the tares of evil are not easily distinguished from the wheat of truth. So it happens, that children have vile imaginings, and eventually show forth general traits of character as the outgrowth, until finally they exhibit all the signs of wickedness.

Such would not be the case if men did not sleep. They cease to watch diligently. They become wrapt in the slumber of worldliness, or of indolence, or of sheer neglect. Parents, teachers and church officers are not ever on the watch for the coming of the devil, and for his tracks. If they would heed the exhortation of the apostle, "abstain from all appearance of evil," the church would not be so troubled with wicked characters. They see these tracks of Satan, perhaps, but never have any fear, though they may have the thought of the source from which they originate. If they would consider the significance of the question, "What harm?" they would know it to be Satan's footprint. That question is never asked, where there is no doubt about the nature of an act. And the very fact that there is a doubt, ought to put us on our guard. Parents forget the interests of the soul, and of the church when they seek the indulgence of the body, or the cultivation of the mind is neglected for outward appearances. Teach children to devote their energies to the mental training to the exclusion of spiritual things, and you leave the devil to sow his tares.

If we allow ourselves to be deterred from the duty of teaching, or warning, or instructing by such unworthy motives as modesty, or timidity, or a desire to be popular, we give Satan a chance, and the tares are scattered abroad.

The result of this activity on the part of Satan, and this carelessness in men, is the existence of evil in the church and the world.

Hence there are wicked people everywhere on this earth. Hence persons get into the church visible who are not real Christians. There was never any change in their hearts, although there may have been a reformation of life. They have never experienced the converting and sanctifying power of divine grace.

For the same reason, there are true Christians who have imperfections and inconsistencies that are a grief to God and a hindrance to the growth of piety.

2. What is to be *the nature of church government?* What is our duty with regard to these irregularities in the church?

(1.) It will and ought to be a matter of deepest concern, as with these servants, relative to the tares in the wheat-field. We should often ask how evil gets a start, in order that we may prevent it. We should ever be desirous to get rid of evil—both evil influences and evil characters. We should be willing to devote ourselves to the accomplishment of this end. That is, the government of the church ought to lie very near the hearts of all God's people. We should all be zealous in the matter.

(2.) But we are to learn that in the invisible church there is to be no such thing as government, in the sense of discipline. As these servants could not separ-

ate the wheat from the tares, so we cannot positively tell who are and who are not real Christians. We cannot judge any man's heart, however well we may know his life and conduct.

Even if we could tell invariably who are and who are not God's true children, it would still be impossible for us to get rid of the latter without doing injury to the former. Their hearts and minds and interests and lives are inseparably woven together. For instance, we might destroy a wicked father, and by so doing destroy the influences by which a godly son is to be brought to manhood, and alienate his mind and heart from what is good and pure.

(3.) But what are we to do with reference to evil in the church visible? How are we to govern the church? In many places in the Bible certain powers are vested in the church, as such, to deal with offenders. But we can find nothing in this parable of the Tares upon this subject. Its teachings pertain exclusively to the invisible church, and to the efforts made by civil rulers to purify the church by persecution. The only teaching we have from the text is found in the parable of the Net; and that is derived from inference.

It often happens that fishermen find a fish in their nets that would tear it to pieces, and they take steps to get it cornered so that it can do no harm; or they cast it out, if they cannot get hands upon it without letting out some of the good fish. So it is the duty of the church, when they find an unruly member, to limit and restrain his power for evil, that he may be rendered harmless; or if possible, without doing violence to the good of the cause, he should be excommunicated.

The object, then, of church government, is to preserve the net—the church; keep it pure, and united, and in peace, so that it will accomplish the work for which it has been organized—the salvation of God's people.

But we need never expect to find the church pure in this world. The wheat cannot be changed into tares, neither the good fish into bad ones; but there will always be tares and bad fish. When, however, time is done, God himself will draw the line, and the good will be preserved, while the wicked will be thrown away and burned up. They will be rejected for their worthlessness, and burned up for their evil doings. They will lose heaven because they are not fit for it, and they will be sent to hell, because they are a trouble to God's kingdom.

Application.

1. Let us learn here, that the existence of counterfeits in religion shows the reality of religion. Men say the church is a sham, because it is impure. This leads us to infer that there is such a thing as a pure church.

We must not say that a society is not a church because it has unworthy members in it. If it does its work in the way of saving souls, we have no right to condemn it.

2. Let us learn, that in the fight against evil, prevention is better than cure. We must not sleep on the post of duty. Let us endeavor to keep the devil away, so that he cannot sow evil seed. At any rate (for it is impossible almost to prevent Satan from his work), let us sow the mind so full of good seed that the bad will not thrive and make a full crop.

THE
PARABLES CLASSIFIED.

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Class I.—Parables in which the Twin Likeness is evident.

NAME.	GRADE.	KIND.	LEADING THOUGHT.	LOCATION.	OBJECT IN VIEW.	PLACE.	DATE.
1. THE MUSTARD SEED,	Major.	Developed.	Growth in Religion,	Matt. xiii. 31, 32,.. Mark iv. 31, 32,... Luke xiii. 19,.....	To show what the kingdom of God is like.	By Sea of Galilee.	A. D. 28
2. THE LEAVEN,	"	"	" "	Matt. xiii. 33, ... Luke xiii. 21,.....			
3. THE HID TREASURE,	"	"	Undeveloped Religion,	Matt. xiii. 44, ...	"	"	" "
4. THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE,	"	"	Developed Religion,	Matt. xiii. 45, 46,.	"	"	" "
5. THE WEDDING FEAST,	"	"	Provisions of Religion,	Matt. xxii. 2–14,...	"	"	" "
6. THE GREAT SUPPER,	"	"	" " "	Luke xiv. 16–24,...	"	Jerusalem.	" "
7. THE TARES,	"	"	Both Good and Bad in the Church,	Matt. xiii. 36–43,..			
				Matt. xiii. 24–30,..	"	Sea of Galilee.	" "
8. THE NET,	"	"	" " " "	Matt. xiii. 47–50,..	"	" " "	" "
9. THE IMPORTUNATE FRIEND,	"	"	Importunate Prayer,	Luke xi. 5–10, ...	Men ought to pray.	Jerusalem.	" "
10. THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW,	"	"	" " "	Luke xviii. 1–8,...			" "
11. THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER,	"	"	God's Interest in Men,	Luke xv. 8–10,....	To Reprove Phar. for not caring for souls.	"	" "
12. THE LOST SHEEP,	"	"	" " "	Luke xv. 4–7,.....		"	" "
13. THE TALENTS,	"	"	Cultivating the Graces,	Matt. xxv. 14–30, .	That we ought to watch and be ready.	"	" 29
14. THE POUNDS,	"	"	" " "	Luke xix. 11–27,..		"	" 28
15. THE UNJUST STEWARD,	"	"	Responsibility,	Luke xvi. 1–12, ...	Not to love the world.	"	" "
16. THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN,	"	"	" "	Matt. xxi. 33–43,..	Reprove Jews for rejecting Christ.	"	" 29
				Mark xii. 1–12, ...			
				Luke xx. 9–18,....			
17. THE BOTTLES,	Minor.	"		Mark ii. 22,.....	About fasting.	Capernaum.	" 28
				Matt. ix. 17,.....			
18. THE PATCHES,	"	"	New and Old Things cannot go together in Religion,	Luke v. 37–39,....			
				Matt. ix. 16,.....			
				Mark ii. 21,.....			
				Luke v. 36,.....			
19. THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN,	Major.	"	True and False Righteousness,	Luke xviii. 9–14,..	Reprove Pharisees for not caring for souls.	Jerusalem.	" "
20. THE PRODIGAL SON,	"	"	" " " "	Luke xv. 11–32,....			
21. THE WICKED SERVANT,	"	"	Forgiveness,	Matt. xviii. 23–35,.	Forgiveness.	Capernaum.	" "
22. THE TWO DEBTORS,	Minor.	"	"	Luke vii. 41–43,...			

23. The Tower Builder,	Minor.	Developed.	Be sure we are right,	Luke xiv. 28–30,	Men must not accept religion hastily.	Cæsarea Philippi.	A. D. 28
24. Going to Battle,	"	"	" " " "	Luke xiv. 31, 32,			
25. The Candle,	"	Undeveloped.	Religion to be made Public by Profession,	Matt. v. 15, 16, / Mark iv. 21,	Importance of Christians in the world.	Sermon on the Mount.	" 27
26. The City on a Hill,	"	"	" " " "	Luke viii. 16; xi. 33 / Matt. v. 15,			

Class II.—Parables in which the Twin Likeness is not so evident.

27. The Ten Virgins,	Major.	Developed.	Watchfulness,	Matt. xxv. 1–13,		Mt. Olives.	A. D. 29
28. The Watchful Servants,	Minor.	Undeveloped.	" "	Matt. xxiv. 43–51, / Mark xiii. 34–37, / Luke xii. 35–48,	Jesus coming to the judgment.	Jerusalem.	" "
29. Dives and Lazarus,	Major.	Developed.	Worldly-mindedness,	Luke xvi. 19–31,	Reproof for worldly mindedness.	"	" 28
30. The Rich Fool,	Minor.	"	" " " "	Luke xii. 16–21,			
31. The Laborers,	Major.	"	Workers in Religion,	Matt. xx. 1–16,	Reproof of Jews for not receiving Christ.	"	" 29
32. The Two Sons,	Minor.	"	" " " "	Matt. xxi. 28–32,			
33. The Seed, Plant and Fruit,	"	"	Results of the Word,	Mark iv. 26–29,		Sea of Galilee.	" 28
34. The Sower,	Major.	"	" " "	Matt. xiii. 3–23, / Mark iv. 3–20, / Luke viii. 5–15,	The effects of the truth.	"	" "
35. The Barren Fig Tree,	Minor.	"	Fruitfulness in Religion,	Luke xiii. 6–10,	Relation between Christ and men.	Jerusalem.	" "
36. The Vine and Branches,	"	"	" " " "	John xv. 1–8,			" 29
37. The Good Samaritan,	Major.	"	Christ's Care and Labor for Men,	Luke x. 30–35,	Christ's labor for men.	"	" 28
38. The Good Shepherd,	Minor.	Undeveloped.	" " " " " "	John x. 1–18,			
39. The Two Builders,	"	Developed.	Something Sure and Steadfast,	Matt. vii. 24–27, / Luke vi. 48, 49,	To teach us to think more of religion than anything else.	Capernaum.	" "
40. Laying Up Treasures,	"	Undeveloped.	" " " " "	Matt. vi. 19–21, / Luke xii. 33, 34, / Luke xviii. 22,		Sermon on the Mount.	" 27
41. Plucking Out the Eye,	"	"	Self-denial,	Matt. xviii. 9,	Teaches us not to give offense.	Capernaum.	" 28
42. Cutting Off the Hand,	"	"	" "	Mark ix. 47, / Matt. xviii. 8, / Mark ix. 43 & 45,			
43. The Bruised Reed,	"	"	Weakness in Religion,	Matt. xii. 20,	To show Christ's sympathy.	"	" "
44. The Smoking Flax,	"	"	" "	" "			
45. The Cup and Platter,	"	"	Appearances,	Matt. xxiii. 25, 26, / Luke xi. 39,	Reproof of Pharisees for hypocrisy.	Jerusalem.	" 29
46. The Sepulchre,	"	"	" "	Matt. xxiii. 27, 28, / Luke xi. 44,		"	" "

Name.	Grade.	Kind.	Leading Thought.	Location.	Object in View.	Place.	Date.
47. The Serpents,	Minor.	Undeveloped.	Poisonous Influences,	Matt. xxiii. 33,	Reproof of Pharisees for heterodoxy.	Jerusalem.	A. D. 29
48. The Vipers,	"	"	" "				
49. The Gnat and Camels,	"	"	Penuriousness in things Pertaining to Religion,	Matt. xxiii. 24–26,	Reproof of Pharisees for heterodoxy.	"	" "
50. Binding Heavy Burdens,	"	"		Matt. xxiii. 4,			
51. Christ's Body,	"	"	Substance and Life of True Religion,	Matt. xxvi. 26, Mark xiv. 22, Luke xxii. 19,	At the institution of the supper.		
52. Christ's Blood,	"	"	" " " " " "	Matt. xxvi. 28, Mark xiv. 24, Luke xxii. 20,			
53. Hunger,	"	"	Spiritual Appetite,	Matt. v. 6,	Sermon on the Mt.	On Mount.	" 27
				Luke vi. 21,	Convert woman of Samaria.	Samaria.	" 29
54. Thirst,	"	"	" "	John iv. 13–15, &c.			
55. Salt,	"	"	Christian Character the Essential thing in the World,	Matt. v. 13,	Sermon on the Mount.	Near Galilee,	" 27
56. Light of the World,	"	"		Matt. v. 14,			
57. Light in the Eye,	"	"	Principles for a Foundation,	Matt. vi. 22, 23,	Sermon on the Mt.	" "	" "
				Luke xi. 34–36,			
58. Treasure in the Heart,	"	"	" " " " "	Matt. xii. 35, Luke vi. 45.	Reproof of Pharisees.	Capernaum.	" 28
59. The Two Masters,	"	"	Unity in Religion,	Matt. vi. 24, Luke xvi. 13,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee.	" 27
				Matt. xii. 25,			
60. The Divided House,	"	"	" " "	Mark iii. 24, Luke xi. 17,	Reproof of Pharisees.	Capernaum.	" 28
				Matt. vii. 2,			
61. Measure for Measure,	"	"	Compensation,	Mark iv. 24, Luke vi. 38,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee.	" 27
62. Cup of Cold Water,	"	"	" "	Matt. x. 42, Mark ix. 41,	Sending out the disciples.	Capernaum,	" 28
63. The Mote and Beam,	"	"	Unprepared Teaching,	Matt. vii. 3–5, Luke vi. 41, 42,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee.	" 27
64. The Blind Guides,	"	"	" " " "	Matt. xxiii. 24, Luke vi. 39,	Reproof of Pharisees.	Capernaum.	" 28
65. Pearls Before Swine,	"	"	Valuables Misused,	Matt. vii. 6,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee.	" 27
				Matt. xv. 26, 27,			
66. Bread for Dogs,	"	"	" " "	Mark vii. 27, 28,	To Phœni'n woman.	Tyre and Sidon.	" 28

67. Child Asking Parents,	Minor.	Undeveloped.	Childlike Faith in Prayer,	Matt. vii. 9–11,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee.	A. D. 27
				Luke xi. 11–13,	Healing the demoniac child.	Mt. Hermon.	" 28
68. Faith as a Mustard Seed,	"	"	" " "	Matt. xvii. 20,			
				Luke xvii. 6,			
				Matt. vii. 13, 14,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee,	" 27
69. The Strait Gate,	"	"	Difficulties in Being a Consistent Christian,	Luke xiii. 24,			
				Matt. xix. 24,	The rich yo'ng man.	Jerusalem.	" 28
70. The Needle's Eye,	"	"	" " " "	Mark x. 25,			
				Luke xviii. 25,			" 27
71. The Wolves,	"	"	Destructive and Seductive Influences in Religion,	Matt. vii. 15,	Beware of false prophets.	Near Galilee.	
72. The Wolves and Sheep,	"	"		Matt. x. 16,			" 28
				Luke x. 3,	Ordaining apostles.	Capernaum,	
73. Good and Evil Trees,	"	"	Indications of the Kind of Work going on,	Luke vi. 43, 44,			" 27
				Matt. vii. 16–20,	Sermon on the Mt.	Near Galilee.	
74. Fair and Foul Weather,	"	"	" " " " "	Matt. xvi. 2, 3,			" 29
				Luke xii. 54 & 56,	Answ'ing Pharisees.	Magdala.	
75. The Dead Burying the Dead,	"	"	Consecration to Religion,	Matt. viii. 22,			" 28
				Luke ix. 60,	Answer to scribe.	Capernaum.	
76. The Plowman,	"	"	" "	Luke ix. 62,			
				Matt. ix. 15,			" 29
77. The Children of the Bride Chamber,	"	"	Cause of Joy in Religion,	Mark ii. 19, 20,	Answer to disciples.	Samaria.	
				Luke v. 34, 35,	Answer about fast'g.	Capernaum.	
							" 28
78. The Woman in Travail,	"	"	" " "	John xvi. 21,	Comfort his disciples for his loss.	Jerusalem.	" "
79. Reaping the Harvest,	"	"	Harvest Time in Religion,	John iv. 35–38,	Talk to Samaritans.	Sychar.	" 27
				Matt. ix. 37,	Miss'n of the seventy.	Galilee.	" 28
80. The Harvest and Laborers,	"	"	" " "	Luke x. 2,			
81. Darkness and Light,	"	"	Publicity of all things,	Matt. x. 27,	" " "	"	" "
82. In the Ear and on the House Top,	"	"	" "	Luke xii. 3,	" " "	"	" "
				Matt. x. 38,			
				Mark viii. 34,			
83. Taking the Cross,	"	"	Service in Religion,	Mark x. 21,	Teach'g his discip's.	Capernaum.	" "
				Luke ix. 23,			
				Luke xiv. 27,			
				Matt. xi. 29, 30,	" " "	"	" "
84. Christ's Yoke,	"	"	" "	Matt. xi. 12,	About John Baptist.	"	" "
85. Heaven Taken by Storm,	"	"	The Violent Nature of True Religion,	Matt. xii. 29,			
				Mark iii. 27,	Abo't unclean spirit	"	" "
86. Binding the Strong Man,	"	"	" " " "	Luke xi. 21, 22,			

Name.	Grade.	Kind.	Leading Thought.	Location.	Object in View.	Place.	Date.
87. The Unclean Spirit,	Minor.	Undeveloped.	Spiritual Desolation,	Matt. xii. 43–45, Luke xi. 24–26,	Repr't of Pharisees.	Capernaum.	A. D. 28 " 29
88. The Desolate House,	"	"	" "	Matt. xxiii. 38, Luke xiii. 35,	Lamentation over Jerusalem.	Jerusalem,	
89. Mother and Brethren,	"	"	Earthly Relations Represent Spiritual Relations,	Matt. xii. 49, Mark iii. 34, Luke viii. 21,	When his mother and brothers desired to speak to him.	Capernaum.	" 28
90. Son and Mother.	"	"	" " "	John xix. 26, 27,	To John and his mother at the cross.	Calvary.	" 29
91. The Leaven of the Sadducees	"	"	Hypocrisy and True profession,	Matt. xvi. 6, Mark viii. 15,	To warn his people against Pharisees.	Jerusalem.	" 29
92. The Green Tree and the Dry,	"	"	" " "	Luke xii. 1, Luke xxiii. 31,	To those who wept as he went to Calv'y.	"	" "
93. As a Child,	"	"	Regeneration,	Matt. xviii. 3, Mark x. 15, Luke xviii. 16,	Not to be ambitious.	Capernaum.	" "
94. Born Again,	"	"	" "	John iii. 3–7,	To Nicodemus.	Jerusalem.	" 27
95. Drink of the Cup,	"	"	Suffering in Religion,	Matt. xx. 22, Mark x. 38, 39, Mark xiv. 36, Luke xxii. 42,	To show how he was to suffer.	Gethsemane.	" 29
96. Baptism,	"	"	" "	Matt. xx. 23, Mark x. 38, 39,	To Peter.	Jerusalem. Bethsaida.	" " " 28
97. Keys,	"	"	Ecclesiastical Authority,	Matt. xvi. 19,	To the lawyer.		
98. Hang on the Commandments,	"	"	" "	Matt. xxii. 40,			
99. Hen and Chickens,	"	"	Christ's Guardianship,	Matt. xxiii. 37, Luke xiii. 34,	Lament over Jerusalem.	Jerusalem.	" 29
100. Shepherd and Sheep,	"	"	" "	Matt. xxvi. 31, Mark xiv. 27,	To his disciples.	Olivet, "	" " " "

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